THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

RICHARD GLOVER,

WITH THE

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

EMBELLISHED WITH SUPERB ENGRAVINGS.

London:

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1817.

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Agnes Bradley
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The Progress of Commerce. Plate 435. Page 1065.

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RICHARD GLOVER.

WITH

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Cooke's Edition.

GLOVER! thy mind in various virtue wise,
Each science claims, and makes each art thy prize;
With Newton, soars familiar to the sky,
Looks nature through, so keen thy mental eye;
Or down descending on the globe below,
Through humble realms of knowledge loves to flow;
Promiscuous beauties dignify thy breast,
By nature happy, as by study blest.
Thou, wit's Columbus! from the epic throne,
New worlds descry'd, and made them all our own.
Thou first through real nature dar'd explore,
And waft her sacred treasures to our shore.
Nor Ariosto's fables fill thy page,
Nor Tasso's points, but Virgil's sober rage.
How soft, how strong, thy varied numbers move,
Or swell'd to glory, or dissolv'd to love.
Correct with ease, where all the graces meet,
Nervously plain, majestically sweet:
The muses will thy sacrifice repay,
Attendant warbling in each heavenly lay.

Thomson's Epistle to Glover.

EMBELLISHED WITH SUPERB ENGRAVINGS.

London:

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Great Britain and
Ireland.

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

RICHARD GLOVER.

Containing his

LEONIDAS,
POEM ON SIR ISAAC NEWTON,
LONDON,
AND
ADMIRAL HOSIER'S GHOST.

But there's a youth that you can name,
Who needs no leading-strings to fame,
Whose quick maturity of brain
The birth of Pallas may explain:
Dreaming of whose depending fate,
I heard Melpomene debate:
This, this is he that was foretold
Should emulate our Greeks of old:
Inspir'd by me with sacred art,
He sings, and rules the varied heart;
If Jove's dread anger he rehearse,
We hear the thunder in his verse,
If he describe love turn'd to rage,
The furies riot on his page;
If he fair liberty and law
By ruffian power expiring draw,
The keener passions then engage
Aright, and sanctify their rage:
If he attempt disastrous love,
We hear those plaints that wound the grove:
With him the kinder passions glow,
And tears distill'd from pity flow.

Green.

London:
PRINTED AND EMBELLISHED
Under the Direction of
C. COOKE.

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1817

THE ſubject of the following memoirs, in whom concentered conſiderable poetical talents and great commercial knowledge, was the ſon of an eminent Hamburgh merchant, and born in the city of London in the year 1712. He compleated his education, both claſſical and mathematical at a country ſchool, where he ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a rapid progreſs in the ſeveral departments of learning to which he applied, and gave early ſpecimens of a poetic genius.

His judgment appears to have been conſiderably matured at a period remarkably early, as, at the age of only ſixteen, he wrote a 'Poem to the Memory of Sir Iſaac Newton,' prefixed to the 'View of Sir Iſaac Newton's Philoſophy,' publiſhed in 4to, 1728, by his intimate friend Dr. Pemberton. "I have preſented my readers," ſays Dr. Pemberton, in the preface to this work, "with a copy of verſes on Sir Iſaac Newton, which I have juſt received from a young gentleman, whom I am proud to reckon among the number of my deareſt friends. If I had any apprehenſion that this piece of poetry ſtood in need of an apology, I ſhould be deſirous the reader might know that the author is but ſixteen years old, and was obliged to finiſh the compoſition in a very ſhort time; but I ſhall only take the liberty to obſerve, that the boldneſs of the digreſſions will be beſt judged of by thoſe who are acquainted with Pindar."

Conſidering this poem as the compoſition of a ſchool-boy, it will excite no ſmall degree of ſurpriſe, as it poſſeſſes more claim to applauſe, and requires fewer allowances for faults, than productions of ſuch an age are always allowed. To Glover may be applied what the Earl of Orford ſaid of his friend Gray, "that he never was a boy."

It is a ſingular trait in the character of Richard Glover, that after he had given inconteſtible proofs of tranſcendant

literary abilities, he did not aſpire beyond the ſphere of commerce, but purſued the ſtudy of it with ſuch attention, as enabled him to become a proficient; and when he attained to a proper age, he commenced Hamburgh merchant, as appears from the following lines at the beginning of his poem entitled 'London.'

Ye northern blaſts, and Eurus, wont to ſweep
With rudeſt pinions o'er the furrowed waves;
A while ſuſpend your violence, and waft
From ſandy Weſer, and the broad-mouth'd Elbe
My freighted veſſels to the deſtin'd ſhore
Safe o'er th' unruffled main———

From the knowledge he had acquired of commercial tranſactions, as well as of men and manners in general, he ſoon attained to a degree of eminence in the mercantile world; but trade did not wholly engroſs his attention; in his hours of retirement, he courted the Muſes, and devoted the time he ſet apart for relaxation, to the ſociety of ſelect companions, eminent for literary and ſcientific acquirements, and was particularly attached to the party in oppoſition to the meaſures of Sir Robert Walpole, at that time prime miniſter of ſtate.

The eminence, as well as verſatility of Glover's poetical talents, are very emphatically repreſented in a poem entitled "The Spleen," written by Green, one of his intimate friends, a very ingenious, though obſcure author, who, in the following lines, preſages his future fame, and evidently alludes to his Leonidas, which he commenced at a very early period of his life.

But there's a youth that you can name,
Who needs no leading ſtrings to fame,
Whoſe quick maturity of brain
The birth of Pallas may explain:
Dreaming of whoſe depending fate,
I heard Melpomene debate:
This, this is he that was foretold,

Should

Should emulate our Greeks of old:
Inſpir'd by me with ſacred art,
He ſings and rules the varied heart;
If Jove's dread anger he rehearſe,
We hear the thunder in his verſe,
If he deſcribe love turn'd to rage,
The furies riot on his page;
If he fair liberty and law,
By ruffian power expiring draw,
The keener paſſions then engage
Aright, and ſanctify their rage;
If he attempt diſaſtrous love,
We hear thoſe plaints that wound the grove;
With him the kinder paſſions glow,
And tears diſtill'd from pity flow.

This poem was publiſhed by Glover in 1737, ſoon after the death of the author.

In the month of May of the ſame year, he entered into the married ſtate, and obtained a dowry of 12,000l. he alſo publiſhed his 'Leonidas,' an epic poem, in nine books, which met with a moſt favourable reception from the public, and greatly enhanced the poetical reputation he had previouſly acquired. But though this poem, at the time of its introduction, was generally approved, as well as inſcribed to Lord Cobham, a very popular nobleman, its celebrity has ſince greatly declined, and its favourable reception at firſt, has been imputed not ſolely to its intrinſic merits, but in part to a zeal, or, as ſome perſons term it, a rage for liberty, which at that time prevailed in England. A party compoſed of the moſt eminent characters for learning, talents, and patriotiſm, formed an oppoſition to the court, and became the warm patrons of every ſpecies of literary compoſition that profeſſedly aſſerted the cauſe of civil and religious liberty. Hence the poem of Leonidas, fraught with the nobleſt ſentiments of liberty, and exhibiting the moſt brilliant achievements of genuine patriotiſm, could

could not fail of ſuch powerful recommendation from the popular party, as muſt enſure to the author a conſiderable degree both of fame and emolument.

It was extolled in the moſt encomiaſtic ſtrains by Lyttleton, then one of the leaders of the oppoſition, in a popular periodical paper entitled 'Common Senſe,' under the ſignature of Philo Muſæus. Alſo by Dr. Pemberton in a pamphlet entitled 'Obſervations on Poetry, eſpecially 'Epic, occaſioned by the late poem of Leonidas; merely with a deſign to deſcant elaborately upon its beauties." And further it was commended by Thompſon of Queen's college, and other poets high in eſtimation. In the courſe of the years 1737 and 1738 it paſſed through three large editions, but it declined conſiderably when the ardour of patriotiſm, and the zeal of party began to abate, as appears from the following obſervations of a modern biographer.

" The imprudent zeal of his friends had encouraged ſuch extravagant ideas of it, that though it was found to have very great beauties, yet the ardour of the lovers of poetry ſoon ſunk into a kind of cold forgetfulneſs with regard to it; becauſe it did not poſſeſs more than the narrow limits of the deſign would admit of, or indeed than it was in the power of human genius to execute. It was ſeverely animadverted upon in a ſeries of letters addreſſed 'to the Au-'thor of Leonidas,' in the 'Weekly Miſcellany,' for May 1738, under the ſignature of Miſo Muſæus.'

His 'London, or the Progreſs of Commerce, and his ballad entitled 'Hoſiers' Ghoſt,' were publiſhed in 1739. The deſign of both theſe poems was to incite the government to reſent the depredations committed on the commerce of the nation by the Spaniards, and the latter written with much humour and ſpirit, had a powerful tendency to effect the purpoſe intended by the publication.

The recommendation of Cobham, Lyttleton, Pitt, and other leaders of the oppoſition, obtained him the notice of

Frederick,

Frederick, Prince of Wales, who had acquired great popularity, by his patronage of men of genius and learning. He was honoured with the countenance of his Highneſs, who, as a teſtimony of regard for his literary talents, preſented him with a complete ſet of the claſſics, bound in the moſt elegant manner.

Party zeal and political animoſity raged at this time throughout the nation in general, but with particular violence in the metropolis; inſomuch that Sir George Champion, alderman and member of parliament for the city of London, who was next in rotation for the chair, was ſet aſide for having offended the majority of his conſtituents, by voting with the court party in the buſineſs of the Spaniſh convention. The motion for this purpoſe was carried on Michaelmas day, when Sir John Salter, the next in rotation, was elected to the mayoralty by the almoſt unanimous voice of the livery in Common Hall aſſembled. Glover, on this occaſion, took a very active part, and defended the conduct of his partizans in a ſpeech equally eloquent and argumentative, which did much honour both to the orator and the cauſe he maintained, and greatly enhanced his character in the opinion of his fellow citizens; as appears from 'A Narrative of what paſſed in the Common Hall of the City of London, aſſembled for the election of a Lord Mayor, on Saturday the 29th of September, on Monday the 1ſt and Tueſday the 2d of October; together with a defence of theſe proceedings, both as reaſonable and agreeable to the practice of former times." 8vo, 1739 written by Benjamin Robins, the ſuppoſed author of 'Lord 'Anſon's Voyage.'

In 1740, the ſame reſolution of the majority continuing, Glover preſided at Vintner's Hall, September 25th, at a meeting of the livery, to conſider of two proper perſons to be recommended to the Court of Aldermen; when it was reſolved to ſupport the nomination of Sir Robert Godſchall, and George Heathcote, Eſq. who being returned to the

Court

Court of Aldermen, the latter gentleman was chofen; but he declining the office, another meeting of the Livery was held at Vintner's Hall, October 13th, when Glover again was called to the chair, and the meeting refolved to return Humphry Parfons, Efq. and Sir Robert Godfchall, to the Court of Aldermen, who made choice of the former to fill the office.

On the 19th of November, another meeting was held at Vintner's Hall, when Glover pronounced an eulogium on Sir John Barnard, and adviſed the Livery to chooſe him one of their repreſentatives in Parliament, notwithſtanding his intention to reſign.

On all theſe occaſions Glover acquitted himſelf in a very able manner. His ſpeeches, printed in the 'London Ma-'gazine,' 1740, and the 'Annals of Europe,' 1740, p. 283 are elegant, ſpirited, and appropriate.

Our author having given, upon theſe occaſions, ſuch ſtriking ſpecimens of his ſuperior abilities, both political and commercial, was, with great propriety, ſelected, by the merchants and principal traders of the city of London, as a perſon duly qualified to conduct their application to parliament, on the very important ſubject of the declenſion of commerce, conſequent on a neglect of attention to it. Glover moſt cordially embraced the offer, and diſplayed in the ſtatement of their caſe, and his addreſs to the Houſe of Commons on the 27th of January, 1742, ſuch profound knowledge of the ſubject he had undertaken, as well as exquiſite ſkill and pathos as an orator in enforcing it, that his ſpeech was ſoon after publiſhed under the title of 'A 'ſhort Account of the late Application to Parliament, made 'by the Merchants of London, upon the Neglect of their 'Trade, with the Subſtance thereupon, as ſummed up by 'Mr. Glover, 8vo. 1742.'

In this, and many other inſtances, he aſſerted the rights and promoted the intereſts of the nation in general, and the city of London in particular, with a zeal and energy

ſo

ſo truly laudable, that he conciliated the univerſal eſteem of his countrymen, and acquired the exalted character of an able and ſteady patriot, as well as a man of the ſtricteſt honour and moſt inviolable integrity.

Sarah, Ducheſs of Malborough, who died in 1774, had bequeathed to Glover, and his contemporary Mallet, five hundred pounds each, on condition of their writing the hiſtory of her conſort the renowned Duke of Malborough. Of Glover, her grace mentions in her will, "that ſhe believes him to be a very honeſt man, who wiſhed, as ſhe did, all the good that could happen to preſerve the liberties and laws of England.

But neither Glover nor Mallet fulfilled the conditions which entitled them to the bequeſt of the ducheſs; the former is ſaid to have renounced his ſhare from motives he never diſcloſed, and the latter, though he profeſſed a deſign of undertaking the taſk, was never known to have entered upon it; a circumſtance of general ſurpriſe, from the popularity of the ſubject, and the emolument attached to the fulfilment of the conditions.

The patriotic zeal and literary purſuits of Glover, diverted his mind from that attention to his private concerns, which reaſon dictates and prudence juſtifies; and induced him to ſacrifice his perſonal intereſt to the public good, ſo that his fortune, being conſiderably impaired, he withdrew from public life, preferring, from very laudable motives, an obſcure retreat to popular applauſe, till time, attention, and economy, ſhould extricate him from his preſent embarraſſments.

During his continuance in retirement, to which his particular friends only had acceſs, the Prince of Wales is ſaid, with his uſual benevolence and liberality, to have ſent him a preſent of five hundred pounds, to conſole him under the loſſes he had ſuſtained, and adminiſter to his comfort and accommodation in his retreat.

The prince dying in March 1751, and the office of Chamberlain

berlain being vacant in May following, Glover, by the importunity of his friends, was prevailed on to abandon his retreat, and offer himself as a candidate, in opposition to Mr. Deputy Harrison. But, whether from his popularity having declined in consequence of his retirement, or the majority of votes having been engaged prior to his application, he found himself in a great minority on the poll, in the course of a few days, and therefore gave up the contest. On Mr. Harrison's being declared duly elected, on the 7th of May, Glover, as unsuccessful candidate, addressed the Livery in the following speech, which did great honour to his head and heart.

" Heretofore I have frequently had occasion of addressing the Livery of London in public; but at this time I find myself at an unusual loss, being under all the difficulties which a want of matter, deserving your notice, can create. Had I now your rights and privileges to vindicate,—had I the cause of your suffering trade to defend,—or were I now called forth to recommend and enforce the parliamentary service of the most virtuous and illustrious citizen,—my tongue would be free from constraint, and, expatiating at large, would endeavour to merit your attention; which now must be confined to so narrow a subject as myself On those occasions, the importance of the matter, and my known zeal to serve you, however ineffectual my attempt might prove, were always sufficient to promise me the honour of a kind reception, and unmerited regard. Your countenance first drew me from the retirement of a studious life; your repeated marks of distinction first pointed, me out to that great body, the merchants of London, who pursuing your example, condescended to intrust me, unequal and unworthy as I was, with the most important cause; a cause where your interest was as nearly concerned as theirs. In consequence of that deference which was paid to the sentiments and choice of the citizens and traders of London, it was impossible but some faint lustre

must

muſt have glanced on me, whom, weak as I was, they were pleaſed to appoint the inſtrument on their behalf; and if from theſe tranſactions I accidentally acquired the ſmalleſt ſhare of reputation, it was to you that my gratitude aſcribes it; and I joyfully embrace this public opportunity of declaring, that whatever part of a public character I may preſume to claim, I owe primarily to you. To this I might add the favour, the twenty years countenance and patronage of one, whom a ſupreme degree of reſpect ſhall prevent me from naming; and though under the temptation of uſing that name as a certain means of obviating ſome miſconſtructions, I ſhall, however, avoid to dwell on the memory of a loſs ſo recent, ſo juſtly, and ſo univerſally lamented.

" Permit me now to remind you, that when placed by theſe means in a light not altogether unfavourable, no lucrative reward was then the object of my purſuit; nor ever did the promiſes or offers of private emolument induce me to quit my independence, or vary from the leaſt of my former profeſſions, which always were, and remain ſtill, founded on the principles of univerſal liberty; principles which I aſſume the glory to have eſtabliſhed on your records. Your ſenſe, and the ſenſe of your great corporation, ſo repeatedly recommended to your repreſentatives in Parliament, were my ſenſe, and the principal boaſt of all my compoſitions, containing matter imbibed in my earlieſt education, to which I have always adhered, by which I ſtill abide, and which I will endeavour to bear down with me to the grave; and even at that gloomy period, when deſerted by my good fortune, and under the ſevereſt trials; even then, by the ſame conſiſtency of opinions, and uniformity of conduct, I ſtill preſerved that part of reputation which I originally derived from your favour, whatever I might pretend to call a public character, unſhaken and unblemiſhed; nor, once in the hour of affliction, did I baniſh from my thoughts, the moſt ſincere

the diction, sentiments, and conduct of the play," 8vo. 1753, and other anonymous remarks, criticisms, and reflections, appeared about this time, relating to this play.

In 1761, he published his "Medea," a tragedy, 4to. taken from the dramas of Euripides and Seneca, and constructed professedly upon the ancient plan, each act terminating with a chorus. It was not acted till 1767, when it was brought on the stage at Drury-Lane, for Mrs. Yates's benefit, and has since been often performed with success. Heinsius and Scaliger have called the Medea of Seneca, the "Alta Medea;" but that title more properly belongs to the work of Glover, which is superior both to the Medea of Seneca, and even that of Euripides. In Euripides, Medea tells us that she murders her children because she would rather have them fall by her own hand, than by the hands of the Corinthians, which, as she had effected the death of Creusa, she might expect. This produces very little that is interesting or affecting. Indeed, when Jason is informed of the murder of his children, he gives a loose to parental sorrow; but the altercations between him and Medea, on that occasion, are very low and trifling. Seneca, with a greater appearance of probability, imputes her murder to revenge. When Medea discovers Jason's fond affection for his children, she immediately meditates their destruction. But when he describes her as deliberating upon this cruel deed, though very ingenious in his distinctions, he is certainly too minute. Medea's motive to the murder, imputed as it is by Glover, to the rage of madness, is much more natural, and produces more affecting scenes than could follow from the motives to which either the Greek or Latin poets have ascribed it. She appears, in the work of our countryman, that wild, infuriate, sun-born Medea, which the ancient mythology represents her. Her indignation, on the thought of Jason's deserting her for Creusa, is forcibly expressed. The pathetic manner of Euripides is happily imitated in the tender conversation between Medea and her children,

children, in the second scene of the third act. When she is told by Jason that he is married to Creusa, her sudden madness is well conceived, and expressed in a grand and affecting manner. But when, still raving and distracted, she comes upon the stage, her hands dropping with the blood of her children, her words and wild appearance perfectly harrow up the soul.

It is begun.
Now, to complete my vengeance, will I mount
The burning chariot of my bright forefather;
The rapid steeds o'er Corinth will I drive,
And, with the scatter'd lightning from their manes,
Consume its walls, its battlements, and towers;
Then, as the flames embrace the purple clouds,
And the proud city crumbles from its base,
The demon of my rage and indignation
All grim, and wrapt in terror, shall bestride
The mountainous embers; and denounce abroad,
To gods and men, my wrongs and my revenge.

When her returning reason discovers to her what she had done, her horror and anguish are dreadful, even beyond imagination. The tragedy ends, like that of Seneca, by representing Medea snatched up into the air in a chariot drawn by dragons. The unities are preserved throughout, the diction in general is harmonious, poetical, and picturesque; animated in proportion to the scenes it represents, and rising or falling with the passions. But the thoughts are sometimes spun too fine; some of the epithets, though not pedantic, are too stiff, and the blank odes, introduced by way of chorus, though not inharmonious, must be very disagreeable to ears long accustomed to rhyme in lyric compositions.

Several years elapsed before Glover appeared upon the stage of the great world; nor does he appear to have surmounted the difficulties and embarrassments which were the causes of his retirement, till the year 1761, when he

came forward, offered himſelf as a candidate, and was elected member for Weymouth, in the parliament which met at the acceſſion of his preſent majeſty to the throne of theſe realms. At the ſame time he intereſted himſelf in the concerns of the Eaſt India company, at one of the elections of a chairman, and introduced in a ſpeech upon that occaſion, the fable of the "Man, Horſe, and Boar," deducing, from a jocular ſubject, a very ſerious inference, "that whenever merchants made uſe of armed forces to maintain their trade, it would end in their deſtruction."

Having greatly enlarged his poem of Leonidas, by the addition of ſeveral new characters, and placing thoſe previouſly introduced in more important and extenſive ſpheres of action, he publiſhed it in 1770, in twelve books; but though the improvements were conſiderable, and very judicious, they did not attract the public curioſity in a degree ſufficient to compenſate the pains and expence attending the publication of a new edition.

On the failure of the bank of Douglas, Heron, and Company, at Ayr, in June 1772, he took a very active part in the ſettling their complicated concerns, and in ſtopping the diſtreſs then ſo univerſally felt. In February 1774, he called the annuitants of that banking-houſe together at the King's Arms Tavern, London, and laid propoſals before them, for the ſecurity of their demands, with which they were fully ſatisfied.

He alſo undertook to manage the intereſts of the merchants and traders of London, concerned in the trade to Germany and Holland, and of the dealers in foreign linens, in their application to Parliament, in May 1774. Both the ſpeeches made on theſe occaſions were publiſhed in a pamphlet that year.

In 1775, he engaged on behalf of the Weſt India merchants, in their application to parliament, and examined the witneſſes, and ſummed up the evidence, in the ſame maſterly manner he had done on former occaſions. For the

the aſſiſtance he afforded the merchants in this buſineſs, he was complimented by them with a ſervice of plate of the value of 300l. and the ſpeech which he delivered in the Houſe was printed. This was the laſt opportunity he had of diſplaying his oratorical abilities in public.

Having now arrived at a period of life which demanded a receſs from buſineſs, he retired to eaſe and independence, and wore out the remainder of his life with dignity and with honour, in the exerciſe of the virtues of private and domeſtic life, and in his attention to the muſe. He died at his houſe in Albemarle-ſtreet, Nov. 25, 1785, in the 73d year of his age.

No edition of his "Leonidas" has been called for ſince 1770. His "London" was reprinted in the ſecond volume of "Pearch's Collection of Poems," 1774. The "Athenaid," a ſequel to "Leonidas," which he bequeathed, with his other manuſcripts, to his daughter, Mrs. Halſey, was preſented to the world, as it came from his hands, with the exception of a few corrections from the pen of a friend, in three vols. 12mo. 1788. He has alſo written a ſequel to his "Medea;" but, as it requires ſcenery of the moſt expenſive kind, it has never been exhibited. It is ſaid, indeed, that it was approved by Mrs. Yates, the magic of whoſe voice and action, in the firſt part, produced as powerful effects as any imputed by Greek or Roman poets to the character ſhe repreſented. He has left ſome other dramatic pieces, which, it is hoped, will be preſented to the world. His "Leonidas," reprinted from the edition 1770, "Poem on Sir Iſaac Newton," "London," and "Hoſier's Ghoſt," are now received into a collection of claſſical Engliſh poetry.

The following character of Glover, drawn up immediately after his death, by his friend Dr. Brocklesby, and printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1785, is adopted without exception, as it contains an accurate and elegant eſtimate of his virtue, his learning, his eloquence, his patriotiſm, and his poetry. "Through

"Through the whole of his life, Mr. Glover was by all good men revered, by the wife eſteemed, by the great ſometimes careſſed, and even flattered, and now his death is ſincerely lamented by all who had the happineſs to contemplate the integrity of his character. Mr. Glover, for upwards of fifty years paſt, through every viciſſitude of fortune, exhibited the moſt exemplary ſimplicity of manners; having early attained that perfect equanimity, which philoſophy often recommends in the cloſet, but which in experience is too ſeldom exerciſed by other men in the teſt of trial. In Mr. Glover were united, a wide compaſs of accurate information in all mercantile concerns, with high intellectual powers of mind, joined to a copious flow of eloquence as an orator in the Houſe of Commons. Since Milton, he was ſecond to none of our Engliſh poets, in his diſcriminating judicious acquaintance with all ancient as well as modern literature; witneſs his "Leonidas," "Medea," "Boadicea," and "London;" for, having formed his own character upon the beſt models of the Greek writers, he lived as if he had been bred a diſciple of Socrates, or companion of Ariſtides. Hence his political turn of mind; hence his unwarped affection and active zeal for the liberties of his country, hence his heartfelt exultation whenever he had to paint the impious deſigns of tyrants, in ancient times fruſtrated, or in modern defeated—defeated in their nefarious purpoſes to extirpate liberty, or to trample on the unalienable rights of man, however remote in time or ſpace from his immediate preſence. In a few words, for the extent of his various erudition, for his unalloyed patriotiſm, and for his daily exerciſe and conſtant practice of Xenophon's philoſophy, in his private as well as in public life, Mr. Glover has left not his equal in the city, and ſome time, it is feared, may elapſe before ſuch another citizen ſhall ariſe, with eloquence, with character, and with poetry, like his, to aſſert their rights, or to vindicate, with equal powers, the juſt claims of freeborn men. Suffice this teſtimony

teſtimony at preſent, as the well-earned meed of this truly virtuous man, whoſe conduct was carefully marked, and narrowly watched, by the writer of the foregoing haſty ſketch, for his extraordinary qualities during the long period in human life of upwards of forty years; and now it is ſpontaneouſly offered as a voluntary tribute, unſolicited and unpurchaſed; but as it appears juſtly due to the memory of ſo excellent a poet, ſtateſman, and true philoſopher, in life and in death the ſame."

This account of his private and public character, by one who knew him well, is ſo ample and ſatisfactory, that it leaves little to be added. In the domeſtic relations of huſband and parent, his manners were as amiable as his abilities were reſpectable. In the character of a merchant, he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the moſt exemplary integrity; yet in fortune he made no advances towards affluence. He was a patriot of the moſt independent caſt, and, ſcorning to bind himſelf to any one political party, was by all alike neglected. But there is a fame, not reſulting from ſo periſhable a means as the contention of parties, and alike out of their power to confer or take away, which will long flouriſh round the name of Glover.

As a poet, his abilities are already well known. His Leonidas, though not in the higheſt claſs of epic poems, had, at its firſt publication, many admirers, and is ſtill peruſed with pleaſure. The ſubject of the poem is the gallant actions of Leonidas, and his heroic defence of, and fall at, the paſs of Thermopylæ. It is characterized by a bold ſpirit of liberty, and generous, tender, and noble ſentiments; but it leans toward the tender rather than the ſublime. The author every where appears to be a virtuous man, and a good citizen; he expreſſes manly and patriotic ſentiments, though many of them are taken from the orations of Lyſias and Iſocrates. The ſtyle poſſeſſes many poetical graces; but it is often familiar and proſaic, and is generally deficient in that awful ſimplicity, and unadorned ſublimity which are the

characteriſtics

characteriſtics of the epic muſe. It abounds in the affecting, the tender, and the beautiful, more than in the heroic and the ſublime. Some of the characters are well drawn, and ſupported with proper dignity and elevation. The epiſode of "Teribaſus" is poetical and pleaſing.

"Can I, O Wiſdom! find relief in thee,
Who doſt approve my paſſion? From the ſnares
Of beauty only thou wouldſt guard my heart.
But here thyſelf art charm'd; where ſoftneſs, grace,
And every virtue dignify delire.
Yet thus to love deſpairing to poſſeſs,
Of all the torments, by relentleſs fate
On life inflicted, is the moſt ſevere.
Do I not feel thy warnings in my breaſt,
That flight alone can ſave me? I will go
Back to the learn'd Chaldeans, on the banks
Of Ganges ſeek the ſages; where to heaven
With thee my elevated ſoul ſhall tow'r.
O wretched Teribazus! all conſpires
Againſt thy peace. Our mighty Lord prepares
To overwhelm the Grecians. Ev'ry youth
Is call'd to war; and I, who lately pois'd
With no inglorious arm, the ſoldier's lance,
Who near the ſide of Hyperanthes fought,
Muſt join the throng. How therefore can I fly
From Ariana, who with Aſia's queens
The ſplendid camp of Xerxes muſt adorn?
Then be it ſo. Again I will adore
Her gentle virtues. Her delightful voice,
Her gracious ſweetneſs ſhall again diffuſe
Reſiſtleſs magic through my raviſh'd heart;
Till paſſion, thus with double rage inflam'd,
Swells to diſtraction in my tortur'd breaſt,
Then—but in vain through darkneſs do I ſearch
My fate—Deſpair and Fortune be my guides."

This

This poem, in its machinery and incident, has been thought defective, but on no principle or reaſon whatever, unleſs a ſuperſtitious reverence for the practice of Homer and Virgil. Theſe poets very properly embelliſhed their ſtory by the traditional tales and popular legends of their own country; but does it thence follow, that in other countries, and in other ages, epic poetry muſt be wholly confined to antiquated fictions and fairy tales? Lucan has compoſed a very ſpirited poem, certainly of the epic kind, where neither gods nor ſupernatural beings are at all employed. Davenant has made an attempt of the ſame kind, not without ſucceſs; and undoubtedly a poetical recital of great adventures, though the agents be every one of them human, may be made productive of the marvellous, without forſaking the probable, and fulfil the chief requiſites of epic compoſition. Leonidas is not exactly founded upon the model of the Iliad of Homer, the Æneid of Virgil, and the Jeruſalem of Taſſo, the three moſt regular and complete epic works that ever were compoſed. But it affords a ſufficient proof that, however the uſe of machinery may heighten the effect, it is not eſſential to the exiſtence, or to the ſucceſs of epic poetry. It has a juſt title to be claſſed with Milton's Paradiſe Loſt, Lucan's Pharſalia, Statius's Thebaid, Camoens's Luſiad, Voltaire's Henriade, and Wilkie's Epigoniad. The diction, the characters, and the narration of the poet are diſtinguiſhed by the general ſtrain and ſpirit of epic compoſition. But it is not without defects: it is too abrupt and laconic in the ſtructure of its periods to ſuit the melody of verſe, and is deficient in that poetical enthuſiaſm which is chiefly raiſed and nouriſhed by an intimate acquaintance with the wild and ſublime ſcenes of nature, and that creative and vigorous imagination, which, preſenting a higher order of things than is to be found in human life, produces the marvellous, and raiſes that admiration which ſhould be the predominant paſſion in heroic poetry. Hence Thomſon, who was a poet truly inſpired, when he heard

that

that a citizen of London had paid his addreſſes to the epic muſe, exclaimed, 'He write an epic poem, who never ſaw a mountain!'

The excellencies of Leonidas have received every poſſible recommendation and illuſtration from the elegant critique of Lyttleton, and the learned "Obſervations" of Dr. Pemberton, to which Mr. Murphy alludes in the following lines, inſerted in the laſt edition of his "Epiſtle to Dr. Johnſon," 1786.

For freedom when Leonidas expires,
Though Pitt and Cobham feel their poet's fires,
Unmov'd, lo! Glover hears the world commend,
And thinks e'en Pemberton too much his friend.

"Since I have read Leonidas," ſays Lyttleton, Common Senſe, No. 10. "I have been ſo full of all the beauties I met with in it, that, to give ſome vent, I found it neceſſary to write to you, and invite my countrymen to take part with me in the pleaſure of admiring what ſo juſtly deſerves their admiration. And, in doing this, I have yet a farther view; I deſire to do them good, as well as pleaſe them; for never yet was an epic poem wrote with ſo noble and ſo uſeful a deſign; the whole plan and purpoſe of it being to ſhew the ſuperiority of freedom over ſlavery; and how much virtue, public ſpirit, and the love of liberty, are preferable both in their nature and effects, to riches, luxury, and the inſolence of power.

"This great and inſtructive moral is ſet forth by an action the moſt proper to illuſtrate it of all that ancient or modern hiſtory can afford, enforced by the moſt ſublime ſpirit of poetry, and adorned by all the charms of an active and warm imagination, under the reſtraint of a cool and ſober judgment.

"And it has another ſpecial claim to protection; for I will venture to ſay, there never was an epic poem which had ſo near a relation to Common Senſe; the author of it not having allowed himſelf the liberty ſo largely taken by his predeceſſors,

predeceſſors, of making excurſions beyond the bounds, and out of ſight of it, into the airy regions of poetical mythology. There are neither fighting gods, nor ſcolding goddeſſes; neither miracles, nor enchantments; neither monſters, nor giants, in his work; but whatſoever human nature can afford that is moſt aſtoniſhing, marvellous, and ſublime.

" And it has this particular merit to recommend it, that, though it has quite the air of an ancient epic poem, there is not ſo much as a ſingle ſimile in it that is borrowed from any of the ancients; and yet, I believe there is hardly any poem that has ſuch a variety of beautiful compariſons; ſo juſt a confidence had the author in the extent and rich abundance of his own imagination.

" The artful conduct of the principal deſign; the ſkill in connecting and adapting every epiſode to the carrying on and ſerving that deſign; the variety of characters, the great care to keep them, and diſtinguiſh each from the other by a propriety of ſentiment and thought; all theſe are excellencies which the beſt judges of poetry will be particularly pleaſed with in Leonidas.

" Upon the whole, I look upon this poem as one of thoſe few of diſtinguiſhed worth and excellence, which will be handed down with reſpect to all poſterity, and which, in the long revolution of paſt centuries, but two or three countries have been able to produce. And I cannot help congratulating my own, that after having, in the laſt age, brought forth a Milton, ſhe has in this produced two more ſuch poets, as we have the happineſs to ſee flouriſh now together, I mean Mr. Pope and Mr. Glover."

Dr. Pemberton's obſervations on the principal characters in Leonidas, under the head " Sentiment and Character," are ſubjoined; as " this is the part of poetry," as he expreſſes it, " in which the divine invention is moſt eminently diſtinguiſhed."

" Xerxes is an example of a little mind inflated with abſolute

ſolute power. He is not only proud, impatient of contradiction, and precipitate, the natural effects of the adoration and blind ſubmiſſion, which had always been paid him; but we ſee in him likewiſe many perſonal weakneſſes. He is poſſeſſed of ſo mean a vanity, as to conclude his great and extenſive dominion a proof of his being ſo ſingular a favourite of heaven, that no bounds could be ſet to his good fortune: he had perſuaded himſelf, that the Greeks muſt have the ſame abject veneration for him as his own ſlaves, and will ſcarce believe that his ambaſſadors had made a true report, who bring him an anſwer contrary to what his fooliſh pride had imagined; and it is with extreme difficulty that his brothers diſſuade him from proceeding againſt them upon that ſuppoſition: nay, at laſt he gives orders for attacking the Greeks with the air of being ſtill confident they muſt ſubmit to his will without reſiſtance. We ſoon after find this haughty and inſolent monarch endued with a temper ſo weak and fickle, that, upon a little ill ſucceſs, all his vain preſumption and confidence abandon him, and he condeſcends to the propoſing conditions, which, before, his pride could not have ſuffered him to think of without the utmoſt indignation.

"In his brother Hyperanthes we ſee a good character, but confined to the virtues, which can have place only under arbitrary government. He is valiant, ſo far unprejudiced as to be duly ſenſible of the ſuperior virtue in his enemies; but had no reluctance to commit any kind of injuſtice towards them, when his brother had pitched upon them for a conqueſt. Otherwiſe he has great good nature, and a juſt eſteem for real merit. This appears in his behaviour towards Demaratus, the Spartan exile, and much more in his ſingular affection for his friend Teribaſus.

"Teribaſus poſſeſſes a very worthy mind, improved by the ſtudy of philoſophy, but oppreſſed by the violence of a ſoft paſſion; a weakneſs which the luxury, and the indulgence

gence for pleaſure in an Aſiatic court muſt have greatly increaſed. But Teribaſus behaves not under this paſſion like the whining lovers of romance, who excite our contempt; but in ſo manly and reaſonable a manner, that makes him an object of juſt compaſſion, and ſtill worthy the eſteem of every one, that has any feeling for human weakneſs.

But unreveal'd and ſilent was his pain:
Nor yet in ſolitary ſhades he roam'd,
Nor ſhunn'd reſort; but o'er his ſorrows caſt
A fickly dawn of gladneſs, and in ſmiles
Conceal'd his anguiſh;

though ſtill

——— the ſecret flame
Rag'd in his boſom, and its peace conſum'd.

"Ariana is ſtill a leſs exceptionable ſubject of pity, as we do not ſo much require in that ſex firmneſs of temper to reſiſt theſe ſoft impreſſions. Her deſpair, and violent reſolution in conſequence of it, are the effects of an exceſs of paſſion very natural to the ſerious and thoughtful turn of her character. They are thus emphatically deſcribed by the poet:

"O torn for ever from theſe weeping eyes!
Thou, who deſpairing to obtain a heart,
Which then moſt lov'd thee, didſt untimely yield
Thy life to Fate's inevitable dart,
For her, who now in agony reveals
Her tender paſſion, who repeats her vows
To thy deaf ear, who fondly to her own
Unites thy cheek, inſenſible and cold.
Alas! do thoſe unmoving ghaſtly orbs
Perceive my guſhing ſorrow! Can that heart
At my complaint diſſolve the ice of death
To ſhare my ſuff'rings! Never, never more
Shall Ariana bend a liſt'ning ear
To thy enchanting eloquence, nor feaſt
Her mind on wiſdom from thy copious tongue!

Oh! bitter, inſurmountable diſtreſs!
She could no more. Invincible deſpair
Suppreſs'd all utterance. As a marble form,
Fix'd on the ſolemn ſepulchre, inclines
The ſilent head in imitated woe
O'er ſome dead hero whom his country lov'd;
Entranc'd by anguiſh, o'er the breathleſs clay
So hung the princeſs. On the goary breach
Whence life had iſſued by the fatal blow,
Mute for a ſpace and motionleſs ſhe gaz'd;
When thus in accents firm. Imperial pomp,
Foe to my quiet, take my laſt farewel.
There is a ſtate, where only virtue holds
The rank ſupreme. My Terribazus there
From his high order muſt deſcend to mine.
Then with no trembling hand, no change of look,
She drew a poniard, which her garment veil'd;
And inſtant ſheathing in her heart the blade,
On her ſlain lover ſilent ſunk in death."

"This epiſode is a ſhining ornament in the poem, as ſuch a tender ſcene is a judicious relief to the ſeverity, which is the general caſt of the work, and is founded upon a kind of diſtreſs, which Ariſtotle expreſsly prefers, ſuch as ariſes from ſome error in a perſon of great and conſpicuous worth. Too frequent a repreſentation of calamities abſolutely unavoidable, ſerve only to deject the ſpirits, and create a diſreliſh for life; but ſuch as are grounded upon pardonable errors, whether exceſs of any paſſion, or defect of judgment, inſtruct, while they excite commiſeration.

"Polydorus, the attendant upon Ariana, is an example of an heroic ſpirit ſo oppreſſed by the flower of his age being waſted in ſlavery, as to have loſt all taſte of life. In leſs elevated characters, long continued calamity debaſes the mind, and confines its wiſhes to mean gratifications; but in the generous breaſt of Polydorus it ends in inſurmountable

able grief. The only pleasure to which we find him sensible, is revenge.

"In Demaratus, the exil d king of Sparta, we have another example of unmerited distress, but of a more delicate kind. Cherished in a luxurious court, with all the ordinary means of enjoyment in his power, he pines away at the sense of being out of a condition to act worthy of himself. In his interview with Polydorus he even suspects and laments a diminution of his virtue. In his conversation with Xerxes, though at first he endeavours to speak of his countrymen with as much reserve as possible; yet we soon see his admiration of their virtues carry him out with great freedom in their praises, and he cannot refrain drawing the parallel between the military force of Greece and of Asia, in terms very disagreeable to the monarch, whose protection he was forced to accept; and in the end breaks into a flood of tears.

——————————Aside
His head he turn'd, and wept in copious streams.
The keen remembrance of his former state,
His dignity, his greatness, and the sight
Of those brave ranks, which thus unshaken stood,
And spread amazement through the world in arms,
Excite these sorrows. His empassion'd looks
Review the godlike warriors, who beneath
His standard once victorious fought, who call'd
Him once their king, their leader; then again,
O'ercharg'd with anguish, he bedews with tears
His rev'rend beard, in agony bemoans
His faded honours, his illustrious name
Forgotten long, his majesty defil'd
By exile, by dependence."

"We ought not to pass over another observation upon this dialogue; the great distinctness with which the argument is here explained. The poet has been able to give every

proof its due place and force, unreſtrained by the numbers of his verſe.

" If we are preſented in the Perſian army with patterns of ill fortune, on which we muſt reflect with regret; when we turn our eyes to the Grecian camp, we find a very different ſcene. There magnanimity is matched againſt the greateſt difficulty human nature can have to contend with, the certain expectation of death: but the fortitude and vigour of mind, by which theſe heroes are ſupported, place them quite out of the ſight of pity; not a ſingle circumſtance ſuggeſts a thought of their being unhappy: on the contrary, they are continually the objects of our admiration, almoſt of our envy. This ardent ſpirit ſhines out moſt eminently in Leonidas, their chief; but from him diffuſes itſelf through them all: though there is not a ſingle leader of eminence among them, which the poet has not marked with a character peculiarly his own.

" The active vigour of Alpheus is very diſtinct from the deliberate valour of Dieneces.

" The ambition of Megiſtias is confined to merit the eſteem of the people by whom he is entertained. Upon this principle he animates his ſon in the fourth book, and the fame is his motive for ſharing their laſt fate.

" The ſilence with which Menalippus obeys the command of his aged father, to provide for his own ſafety, is, I think, very judiciouſly imagined. For though it is not neceſſary that every gallant man ſhould have the reſolution to make a voluntary ſacrifice of his life; yet the want of the ſame high ſpirit by which the reſt are animated, muſt impreſs on him that conſciouſneſs of his inferiority, and create that degree of confuſion, which of neceſſity muſt cloſe his lips.

" The gentle and polite character of Agis renders him in particular worthy the intimate friendſhip of the great Leonidas; in whom humanity and a liberal turn of mind diſtinguiſh themſelves among his more ſublime virtues.

" The

"The fierceneſs of Diomedon makes indignation and high contempt of an effeminate enemy, whom he had formerly ſeen to fly before him, a ruling motive in his conduct.

"In Demophilus we ſee a ſpeculative temper, where cool reflection ſupports an aged mind, and ſupplies the fire of youth. This draws from him thoſe inſtructive ſentiments, which he utters over the body of Phraortes. There is the ſame air in the ſhort addreſs at his firſt interview with Leonidas. And the ſame appears again, when he makes his choice for himſelf and all his troops to accompany Leonidas in his laſt fate. The ſublimity of this character diſtinguiſhably appears upon this occaſion towards his kinſman Dithyrambus.

"The aged Megiſtias will not permit his ſon to finiſh his life with himſelf. But though Demophilus bears the affection of a parent to his, the ſuperior turn of his mind makes him fonder of the glory than of the life of Dithyrambus.

"Dithyrambus poſſeſſes, in an eminent degree, the amiable character of high merit accompanied with equal modeſty. His ambition is ever to deſerve praiſe rather than receive it. He chooſes Diomedon for his conſtant companion in action, his wiſh being to equal the greateſt. And at the ſame time he is an admirer of all virtue but his own.

"This moderation, and delicacy of mind, create that reluctance, with which he engages Teribaſus, whoſe virtues, though in an enemy, he held in high eſteem. In this ſcene the poet has brought together ſeveral characters, and ſupported each with great ſucceſs. The gloomy caſt of mind, which ever accompanied Teribaſus, here appears without breaking his ſpirit. The impatience with which Hyperanthes advances forward, when he hopes to ſee his friend victorious, the eagerneſs, with which he flies to revenge upon his diſappointment, and the ſudden ſuſpenſe of that reſolution to aſſiſt his dying friend, with the return of his indignation, as ſoon as his friend ex-

pires, are ſtrong effects of that warmth of heart becom'ng a firm amity.

" The reſpective characters of theſe two heroes are alſo well preſerved in the manner, wherein each takes his reſolution to ſhare the glory with Leonidas, in his fatal cataſtrophe. The fierce intrepidity of Diomedon prompts him to appear the foremoſt of all in this high-ſpirited reſolution; and Dithyrambus, with the modeſty peculiar to his character, is ſolicitous to throw an humble ſhade over his own glory. The eulogium paſſed on Ariſtander, who was ſlain by Phraortes, is ſingularly picturesque and beautiful.

" For brevity I paſs over the leſſer characters of the poem; though they alſo are diſtinctly marked. The ſavage fierceneſs of Phraortes, the vain arrogance of Tigranes, the diffidence and hypocriſy of Anaxander, and the confidence in villany of Epialtes, are very maniſeſt.

" The character of Leonidas is the moſt diſtinctly exhibited of any, being placed in a greater variety of lights.—We ſee him in council, in the army, in his family, and in his retirements. His firſt appearance in the Spartan council, ſhows us the ruling principle of his mind. The general principle, upon which valiant and heroic actions are founded, is, that there are occaſions, which make it reaſonable to put life in hazard. And we daily ſee this principle exerted, in very different degrees, in proportion to the meaſure of courage and ſpirit of different men. But Leonidas extends this principle ſo far, and has formed ſo exalted a conception of virtue, as to think it neceſſary for a great man to place the deſire of life wholly out of the queſtion.

" This day, O Grecians! countrymen, and friends,
Your wives, your offspring, your paternal ſeats,
Your parents, country, liberty, and laws,
Demand your ſwords. You gen'rous, active, brave,
Vers'd in the various diſcipline of Mars,
Are now to grapple with ignoble foes

In

In war unskilful, nature's basest dross,
And thence a monarch's mercenary slaves.
Relax'd their limbs, their spirits are deprav'd
By eastern sloth and pleasure. Hire their cause,
Their only fruit of victory is spoil.
They know not freedom, nor its lib'ral cares.
Such is the flower of Asia's host. The rest,
Who fill her boasted numbers, are a crowd,
Forc'd from their homes; a populace in peace,
By jealous tyranny disarm'd, in war
Their tyrant's victims. Taught in passive grief
To bear the rapine, cruelty, and spurns
Of Xerxes's mercenary band, they pine
In servitude to slaves. With terror sounds
The trumpet's clangour in their trembling ears.
Unwonted loads, the buckler and the lance
Their hands sustain, encumber'd, and present
The mockery of war.—But every eye
Shoots forth impatient flames. Your gallant breasts
Too long their swelling spirit have confin'd.
Go, then, ye sons of liberty; go, sweep
These bondmen from the field. Resistless rend
The glitt'ring standard from their servile grasp.
Hurl to the ground their ignominious heads,
The warrior's helm profaning. Think, the shades
Of your forefathers lift their sacred brows,
Here to enjoy the glory of their sons."

"It is upon this foot, that, notwithstanding the character of Leonidas is raised so far above that of other men, yet it appears absolutely natural; because his motives are not of a different nature from those of others, but only improved in degree.

"When Leonidas is retired, and the warmth of heart, excited by the public presence, is so far abated that he is left without restraint to his cool reflections, the poet has taken care not to outrage his character by divesting him of human

human nature; but we ſee thoſe ſtruggles, which muſt neceſſarily paſs through the mind of the greateſt man upon ſo extraordinary an occaſion. Here he is not without natural fears; but has a ſpirit in his moſt deliberate moments to overcome them. His principal motive is the public good; though he is alſo not inſenſible to the fame which muſt accompany ſo meritorious an action.

"Cold men have conſidered this ſublime degree of that deſire of praiſe, which is implanted in our nature, as a weakneſs; but it is certainly a part of Leonidas's character to hold it in high eſteem; for as he has recourſe to it for the ſupport of his own mind, ſo in his firſt ſpeech to his followers, on their arrival at Thermopylæ, he excites them to act with their utmoſt vigour upon the ſame motives.

"In his family another part of his character appears. He is there tender and affectionate, but ſtill able to ſuppreſs the ſecret motions of his own heart, when it was neceſſary for inſpiring his queen with ſpirit to ſupport a calamity unavoidable. And, accordingly, he does in part raiſe and calm her mind. But when the ſudden warning for his departure has renewed her grief, that ſhe faints in his arms, and he is left, as it were, alone to himſelf, he breaks out into a degree of tenderneſs, that ſhows all his foregoing reſolution to be the effect of true firmneſs of mind, not of inſenſibility.

"We next ſee him before the general council of Greece; and here he acts a new part. In the Spartan council he exerts a ſpirit and vigour, that commands all who hear him; but now he gives his advice with the moderation of one more diſpoſed to be directed, than authoritatively to influence an aſſembly, to whoſe prudence the general ſtates of the country had intruſted the conduct of their affairs.

"He is next brought into the field, and ſhown in the midſt of thoſe dangers, to which, for the public ſervice, he had ſo freely offered himſelf. And here the ſame reſolution ſupports him to perform, with the greateſt coolneſs, all the offices

offices of a ſkilful and prudent commander, to contemn in his laſt honrs every peril, and to meet his fate with no leſs firmneſs than that, wherewith he firſt accepted of it, at a diſtance, in the council of Sparta, as appears from the beautiful paſſage with which the author concludes his poem.

"Thus I think our author, in his principal Grecian heroes, and moſt eminently in Leonidas their leader, has repreſented, with ſingular ſtrength and truth, virtuous characters of high ſpirit, ſuperior to the greateſt misfortunes; which is an achievement Plato thought the moſt difficult of all poetical imitation."

The author of the "Remarks on Leonidas," in the "Weekly Miſcellany," No. 234, af er taking notice of ſeveral faults and improprieties, concludes thus:—"I ought in juſtice to confeſs to thoſe readers who may chance not to have read Leonidas, that though there are faults ſufficient to juſtify the oppoſition I made to it, yet there are beauties more than ſufficient to repay them the trouble in reading it over."

In the Athenaid, which is a poetical hiſtory of the wars between the Greeks and Perſians, in thirty books, he propoſes revenge for the death of Leonidas, as the great ſubject of his poem. The following is the exordium:

The Perſians vanquiſh'd, Greece from bondage ſav'd,
The *death of great Leonidas reveng'd*,
By Attic virtue——celebrate O muſe!

The concluſion is in the ſame ſtrain,

——————Night drops her ſhade
On thirty millions ſlaughter'd. Thus thy death
Leonidas of Sparta was aveng'd;
Greece thus by Attic virtue was preſerv'd.

It is indeed ſo much a counterpart to Leonidas, though ſtill more proſaic, as to ſuperſede the neceſſity of a particular critique. Events that are the ſubject of authentic record, are ill adapted to epic poetry. At the ſame time, the hiſtorical tranſactions of every age, are capable of poetical arrangement,

rangement, and poetical embelliſhment. But the narrow and limited view which he has taken of his ſubject, removes its grandeſt and moſt dignified aſpect, and renders the epic muſe inferior to the hiſtorical. Many of the epiſodes, however, are affecting and pathetic; and ſome of the characters are well drawn, particularly thoſe of Themiſtocles and Ariſtides. But the importance and dignity of the events recorded are much diminiſhed by the poetical mode of narration, and ſtrike us leſs than in the original hiſtorian."

His London requires no diſtinct examination. The ſubject, which is the origin and progreſs of commerce, is peculiarly intereſting to Britons; and the compoſition diſcovers a vigour of invention, a force of deſcription, a dignity of ſentiment, and a facility of expreſſion, not unworthy of the author of Leonidas. His Hoſier's Ghoſt is one of the moſt pathetic and beautiful ballads in the Engliſh language.

LEONIDAS:

A POEM.

IN TWELVE BOOKS.

———Θανεῖν δ' οἷσιν ἀνάγκα,
Τί κε τις ἀνώνυμον γῆρας, ἐν σκότῳ
Καθήμενος, ἔψοι μάταν, ἀπάντων
Καλῶν ἄμμορος; *Pind. Olymp. Od. I.*

PREFACE.

TO illustrate the following poem, to vindicate the subject from the censure of improbability, and to show, by the concurring evidence of the best historians, that such disinterested public virtue did once exist, I have thought it would not be improper to prefix the subsequent narration.

While Darius, the father of Xerxes, was yet on the throne of Persia, Cleomenes and Demaratus were kings in Lacedemon, both descended from Hercules. Demaratus was unfortunately exposed, by an uncertain rumour, which rendered his legitimacy suspected, to the malice and treachery of his colleague, who had conceived a personal resentment against him; for Cleomenes, taking advantage of this report, persuaded the Spartans to examine into the birth of Demaratus, and refer the difficulty to the oracle of Delphi; and was assisted in his perfidious designs by a near relation of Demaratus, named Leutychides, who aspired to succeed him in his dignity. Cleomenes found means to corrupt the priestess of Delphi, who declared Demaratus not legitimate. Thus, by the base practices of his colleague Cleomenes, and of his kinsman Leutychides, Demaratus was expelled from his regal office in the commonwealth, a Lacedemonian, distinguished in action and counsel, and the only king of Sparta, who, by obtaining the Olympic prize in the chariot-race, had increased the lustre of his country. He went into voluntary banishment; and, retiring to Asia, was there protected by Darius, while Leutychides succeeded to the regal authority in Sparta. Upon the death of Cleomenes, Leonidas became king, who ruled in conjunction with this Leutychides, when Xerxes, the son of Darius, invaded Greece. The number of land and naval forces which accompanied that monarch, together with the servants, women, and other usual attendants on the army of an eastern prince, amounted to upwards of five millions, as reported by Herodotus, who wrote within a few years

after the event, and publicly recited his hiſtory at the Olympic games. In this general aſſembly, not only from Greece itſelf, but from every part of the world, wherever a colony of Grecians was planted, had he greatly exceeded the truth, he muſt certainly have been detected, and cenſured by ſome among ſo great a multitude; and ſuch a voluntary falſehood muſt have entirely deſtroyed that merit and authority, which have procured to Herodotus the veneration of all poſterity, with the appellation of the Father of Hiſtory. On the firſt news of this attempt on their liberty, a convention, compoſed of deputies from the ſeveral ſtates of Greece, was immediately held at the Iſthmus of Corinth, to conſult on proper meaſures for the public ſafety. The Spartans alſo ſent meſſengers to inquire of the oracle at Delphi into the event of the war, who returned with an anſwer from the prieſteſs of Apollo, that either a king, deſcended from Hercules, muſt die, or Lacedemon would be entirely deſtroyed. Leonidas immediately offered to ſacrifice his life for the preſervation of Lacedemon; and, marching to Thermypolæ, poſſeſſed himſelf of that important paſs, with three hundred of his countrymen; who, with the forces of ſome other cities in the Peloponneſus, together with the Thebans, Theſpians, and the troops of thoſe ſtates, which adjoined to Thermopylæ, compoſed an army of near eight thouſand men.

Xerxes was now advanced as far as Theſſalia; when, hearing that a ſmall body of Grecians was aſſembled at Thermopylæ, with ſome Lacedemonians at their head, and among the reſt Leonidas, a deſcendent of Hercules, he diſpatched a ſingle horſeman before to obſerve their numbers, and diſcover their deſigns. When this horſeman approached, he could not take a view of the whole camp, which lay concealed behind a rampart, formerly raiſed by the Phocians at the entrance of Thermopylæ on the ſide of Greece; ſo that his whole attention was engaged by thoſe who were on guard before the wall, and who at that inſtant chanced to be the Lacedemonians. Their manner and geſtures greatly aſtoniſhed the Perſian. Some were amuſing themſelves in gymnaſtic exerciſes; others were combing their hair; and all diſcovered a total diſregard of him, whom they ſuffered to depart, and report to Xerxes what he had ſeen; which appearing to that prince very ridiculous, he ſent for Demaratus, who was with him in the camp, and required him to explain this ſtrange behaviour of his countrymen. Demaratus informed him, that it was a cuſtom among the Spartans to comb down and adjuſt their hair, when they were determined to fight to the laſt extremity

extremity. Xerxes, notwithſtanding, in the confidence of his power, ſent ambaſſadors to the Grecians to demand their arms, to bid them diſperſe, and become his friends and allies; which propoſals being received with diſdain, he commanded the Medes and Ciſſians to ſeize on the Grecians, and bring them alive into his preſence. Theſe nations immediately attacked the Grecians, and were ſoon repulſed with great ſlaughter; freſh troops ſtill ſucceeded, but with no better fortune than the firſt, being oppoſed to an enemy not only ſuperior in valour and reſolution, but who had the advantage of diſcipline, and were furniſhed with better arms, both offenſive and defenſive.

Plutarch, in his Laconic Apothegms, reports, that the Perſian king offered to inveſt Leonidas with the ſovereignty of Greece, provided he would join his arms to thoſe of Perſia. This offer was too conſiderable a condeſcenſion to have been made before a trial of their force, and muſt therefore have been propoſed by Xerxes after ſuch a ſeries of ill ſucceſs, as might probably have depreſſed the inſolence of his temper; and it may be eaſily admitted, that the virtue of Leonidas was proof againſt any temptations of that nature. Whether this be a fact or not, thus much is certain, that Xerxes was reduced to extreme difficulties by this reſolute defence of Thermopylæ, till he was extricated from his diſtreſs by a Malian, named Epialtes, who conducted twenty thouſand of the Perſian army into Greece through a paſs, which lay higher up the country among the mountains of Oeta; whereas the paſſage at Thermopylæ was ſituated on the ſea-ſhore, between thoſe mountains and the Malian bay. The defence of the upper paſs had been committed to a thouſand Phocians, who, upon the firſt ſight of the enemy, inconſiderately abandoned their ſtation, and put themſelves in array upon a neighbouring eminence; but the Perſians wiſely avoided an engagement. and with the utmoſt expedition marched to Thermopylæ.

Leonidas no ſooner received information that the Barbarians had paſſed the mountains, and would ſoon be in a ſituation to ſurround him, than he commanded the allies to retreat, reſerving the three hundred Spartans, and four hundred Thebans, whom, as they followed him with reluctance at firſt, he now compelled to ſtay But the Theſpians, whoſe number amounted to ſeven hundred, would not be perſuaded by Leonidas to forſake him. Their commander was Demophilus; and the moſt eminent amongſt them for his valour was Dithyrambus, the ſon of Harmatides. Among the Lacedemonians, the moſt conſpicuous next to Leonidas, was Dieneces, who being told that the

multitude of Perſian arrows would obſcure the ſun, replied, the battle would then be in the ſhade. Two brothers, named Alpheus and Maron, are alſo recorded for their valour, and were Lacedemonians. Megiſtias, a prieſt, by birth an Arcanarian, and held in high honour at Sparta, refuſed to deſert Leonidas, though entreated by him to conſult his ſafety, but ſent away his only ſon, and remained himſelf behind to die with the Lacedemonians.

Herodotus relates, that Leonidas drew up his men in the broadeſt part of Thermopylæ, where, being encompaſſed by the Perſians, they fell with great numbers of their enemies; but Plutarch, Diodorus Siculus, and others, affirm, that the Grecians attacked the very camp of Xerxes in the night.—Both theſe diſpoſitions are reconcileable to probability. He might have made an attack on the Perſian camp in the night, and in the morning withdrawn his forces back to Thermopylæ, where they would be enabled to make the moſt obſtinate reſiſtance, and ſell their lives upon the deareſt terms. The action is thus deſcribed by Diodorus: "The Grecians having now rejected all thoughts of ſafety, preferring glory to life, unanimouſly called on their general to lead them againſt the Perſians, before they could be appriſed that their friends had paſſed round the mountains. Leonidas embraced the occaſion, which the ready zeal of his ſoldiers afforded, and commanded them forthwith to dine as men who were to ſup in Elyſium. Himſelf, in conſequence of this command, took a repaſt, as the means to furniſh ſtrength for a long continuance, and to give perſeverance, in danger. After a ſhort refreſhment, the Grecians were now prepared, and received orders to aſſail the enemies in their camp, to put all they met to the ſword, and force a paſſage to the royal pavilion; when, formed into one compact body, with Leonidas himſelf at their head, they marched againſt the Perſians, and entered their camp at the dead of night. The Barbarians, wholly unprepared, and blindly conjecturing that their friends were defeated, and themſelves attacked by the united power of Greece, hurry together from their tents with the utmoſt diſorder and conſternation.—Many were ſlain by Leonidas and his party, but much greater multitudes by their own troops, to whom, in the midſt of this blind confuſion, they were not diſtinguiſhable from enemies; for, as night took away the power of diſcerning truly, and the tumult was ſpread univerſally over the camp, a prodigious ſlaughter muſt naturally enſue.—The want of command, of a watch word, and of confidence in themſelves, reduced the Perſians to ſuch a ſtate of confuſion, that they deſtroyed each other without diſtinction.—

Had

Had Xerxes continued in the royal pavilion, the Grecians, without difficulty, might have brought the war to a ſpeedy concluſion by his death; but he, at the beginning of the tumult, betook himſelf to flight with the utmoſt precipitation; when the Grecians, ruſhing into the tent, put to the ſword moſt of thoſe who were left behind; then, while night laſted, they ranged through the whole camp, in diligent ſearch of the tyrant. When morning appeared, the Perſians, perceiving the true ſtate of things, held the inconſiderable number of their enemies in contempt, yet were ſo terrified at their valour, that they avoided a near engagement; but encloſing the Grecians on every ſide, ſhowered their darts and arrows upon them at a diſtance, and in the end deſtroyed their whole body. In this manner fell the Grecians who, under the conduct of Leonidas, defended the paſs of Thermopylæ. All muſt admire the virtue of theſe men, who with one conſent maintaining the poſt allotted by their country, cheerfully renounced their lives for the common ſafety of Greece, and eſteemed a glorious death more eligible than to live with diſhonour. Nor is the conſternation of the Perſians incredible. Who among thoſe Barbarians could have conjectured ſuch an event? Who could have expected that five hundred men would have dared to attack a million?—Wherefore ſhall not all poſterity reflect on the virtue of theſe men as the object of imitation, who, though the loſs of their lives was the neceſſary conſequence of their undertaking, were yet unconquered in their ſpirit, and among all the great names delivered down to remembrance, are the only heroes who obtained more glory in their fall, than others from the brigheſt victories? With juſtice may they be deemed the preſervers of the Grecian liberty, even preferably to thoſe who were conquerors in the battles fought afterwards with Xerxes; for the memory of that valour exerted in the defence of Thermopylæ, for ever dejected the Barbarians, while the Greeks were fired with emulation to equal ſuch a pitch of magnanimity. Upon the whole, there never were any before theſe who attained to immortality, through the mere exceſs of virtue; whence the praiſe of their fortitude hath not been recorded by hiſtorians only, but hath been celebrated by numbers of poets; among others by Simonides the lyric."

Pauſanius, in his Laconics, conſiders the defence of Thermopylæ, by Leonidas, as an action ſuperior to any achieved by his contemporaries, and to all the exploits of preceding ages. "Never," ſays he, "had Xerxes beheld Greece, and laid in aſhes the city of Athens, had not his forces, under Hydarnes been conducted through a path over

mount Oeta, and, by that means, encompaſſing the Greeks, overcome and ſlain Leonidas." Nor is it improbable, that ſuch a commander, at the head of ſuch troops, ſhould have maintained his poſt in ſo narrow a paſs, till the whole army of Xerxes had periſhed by famine. At the ſame time his navy had been miſerably ſhattered by a ſtorm, and worſted in an engagement with the Athenians at Artemiſium.

To conclude, the fall of Leonidas and his brave companions, ſo meritorious to their country, and ſo glorious to themſelves, hath obtained ſuch a high degree of veneration and applauſe from paſt ages, that few among the ancient compilers of hiſtory have been ſilent on this amazing inſtance of magnanimity and zeal for liberty; and many are the epigrams and inſcriptions now extant, ſome on the whole body, others on particulars, who died at Thermopylæ, ſtill preſerving their memory in every nation converſant with learning, and at this diſtance of time ſtill rendering their virtue the object of admiration and of praiſe.

I ſhall now detain the reader no longer, than to take this public occaſion of expreſſing my ſincere regard for the Lord Viſcount Cobham, and the ſenſe of my obligations for the early honour of his friendſhip; to him I inſcribe the following poem; and herein I ſhould be juſtified, independent of all perſonal motives, from his Lordſhip's public conduct, ſo highly diſtinguiſhed by his diſintereſted zeal and unſhaken fidelity to his country, not leſs in civil life than in the field: to him, therefore, a poem, founded on a character eminent for military glory, and love of liberty, is due from the nature of the ſubject.

R. GLOVER.

LEONIDAS.

BOOK I.

The Argument.

XERXES, king of Perſia, having drawn together the whole force of his empire, and paſſed over the Helleſpont into Thrace, with a deſign to conquer Greece; the deputies from the ſeveral ſtates of that country, who had ſome time before aſſembled themſelves at the Iſthmus of Corinth, to deliberate on proper meaſures for reſiſting the invader, were no ſooner appriſed of his march into Thrace, than they determined, without further delay, to diſpute his paſſage at the ſtreights of Thermopylæ, the moſt acceſſible part of Greece on the ſide of Thrace and Theſſaly. Alpheus, one of the deputies from Sparta, repairs to that city, and communicates this reſolution to his countrymen; who chanced that day to be aſſembled in expectation of receiving an anſwer from Apollo, to whom they had ſent a meſſenger to conſult about the event of the war. Leutychides, one of their two kings, counſels the people to advance no farther than the Iſthmus of Corinth, which ſeparates the Peleponneſus, where Lacedemon was ſituated, from the reſt of Greece; but Leonidas, the other king, diſſuades them from it. Agis the meſſenger, who had been deputed to Delphi, and brother to the queen of Leonidas, returns with the oracle; which denounces ruin to the Lacedemonians, unleſs one of their kings lays down his life for the public. Leonidas offers himſelf for the victim. Three hundred more are appointed, all citizens of Sparta, and heads of families, to accompany and die with him at Thermopylæ. Alpheus returns to the Iſthmus. Leonidas, after an interview with his queen, departs from Lacedemon. At the end of ſix days he encamps near the Iſthmus, when he is joined by Alpheus; who deſcribes the auxiliaries, they waiting at the Iſthmus; thoſe who are already poſſeſſed of Thermopylæ, as alſo the paſs itſelf; and concludes with relating the captivity of his brother Polydorus, in Perſia.

THE virtuous Spartan, who reſign'd his life
To ſave his country at th' Oetæan ſtreights,
Thermopylæ, when all the peopled eaſt
In arms with Xerxes fill'd the Grecian plains,
O muſe, record! The Helleſpont they paſs'd,
O'erpow'ring Thrace. The dreadful tidings ſwift
To Corinth flew. Her Iſthmus was the ſeat
Of Grecian council. Alpheus thence returns
To Lacedemon. In aſſembly full
He finds the Spartan people with their kings;
Their kings, who boaſt an origin divine,
From Hercules deſcended. They the ſons
Of Lacedemon had conven'd, to learn
The ſacred mandates of th' immortal gods,
That morn expected from the Delphian dome.
But Alpheus ſudden their attention drew,
And thus addreſs'd them: For immediate war,
My countrymen, prepare. Barbarian tents
Already fill the trembling bounds of Thrace.

The Iſthmian council hath decreed to guard
Thermopylæ, the Locrian gate of Greece.
Here Alpheus paus'd. Leutychides, who ſhar'd
With great Leonidas the ſway, uproſe
And ſpake. Ye citizens of Sparta, hear.
Why from her boſom ſhould Laconia ſend
Her valiant race to wage a diſtant war
Beyond the Iſthmus? There the gods have plac'd
Our native barrier. In this favour'd land,
Which Pelops govern'd, us of Doric blood
That Iſthmus inacceſſible ſecures.
There let our ſtandards reſt. Your ſolid ſtrength,
If once you ſcatter in defence of ſtates
Remote and feeble, you betray your own,
And merit Jove's deriſion. With aſſent
The Spartans heard. Leonidas reply'd:
O moſt ungen'rous counſel! moſt unwiſe!
Shall we, confining to the Iſthmian fence
Our efforts, leave beyond it ev'ry ſtate
Diſown'd, expos'd? Shall Athens, while her fleets
Unceaſing watch th' innumerable foes,
And truſt the impending dangers of the field
To Sparta's well-known valour, ſhall ſhe hear,
That to barbarian violence we leave
Her unprotected walls? Her hoary ſires,
Her helpleſs matrons, and their infant race,
To ſervitude and ſhame? Her guardian gods
Will yet preſerve them. Neptune o'er his main,
With Pallas, pow'r of wiſdom, at their helms,
Will ſoon tranſport them to a happier clime,
Safe from inſulting foes, from falſe allies,
And eleutherian Jove will bleſs their flight.
Then ſhall we feel the unreſiſted force
Of Perſia's navy, deluging our plains
With inexhauſted numbers. Half the Greeks,
By us betray'd to bondage, will ſupport
A Perſian lord, and lift th' avenging ſpear
For our deſtruction. But, my friends, reject
Such mean, ſuch dang'rous counſels, which would blaſt

Your long-eſtabliſh'd honours, and aſſiſt
The proud invader. O eternal king
Of gods and mortals, elevate our minds!
Each low and partial paſſion thence expel!
Greece is our gen'ral mother. All muſt join
In her defence, or, ſep'rate, each muſt fall.
This ſaid, authority and ſhame controll'd
The mute aſſembly. Agis too appear'd,
He from the Delphian cavern was return'd,
Where, taught by Phœbus on Parnaſſian cliffs,
The Pythian maid unfolded Heav'ns decrees.
He came; but diſcontent and grief o'ercaſt
His anxious brow. Reluctant was his tongue,
Yet ſeem'd full charg'd to ſpeak. Religious dread
Each heart relax'd. On ev'ry viſage hung
Sad expectation. Not a whiſper told
The ſilent fear. Intenſely all were fix'd,
All ſtill as death, to hear the ſolemn tale.
As o'er the weſtern waves, when ev'ry ſtorm
Is huſh'd within its cavern, and a breeze,
Soft-breathing, lightly with its wings along
The ſlacken'd cordage glides, the ſailors' ear
Perceives no ſound throughout the vaſt expanſe;
None, but the murmurs of the ſliding prow,
Which ſlowly parts the ſmooth and yielding main:
So through the wide and liſtening crowd no ſound,
No voice, but thine, O Agis, broke the air!
While thus the iſſue of thy awful charge
Thy lips deliver'd, Spartans, in your name
I went to Delphi. I enquir'd the doom
Of Lacedemon from th' impending war,
When in theſe words the deity reply'd:
"Inhabitants of Sparta, Perſia's arms
"Shall lay your proud and ancient ſeat in duſt;
"Unleſs a king, from Hercules deriv'd,
"Cauſe Lacedemon for his death to mourn."
As when the hand of Perſeus had diſclos'd
The ſnakes of dire Meduſa, all who view'd
The Gorgon features, were congeal'd to ſtone,

With ghaſtly eyeballs on the hero bent,
And horror, living in their marble form;
Thus with amazement rooted, where they ſtood,
In ſpeechleſs terror frozen, on their kings
The Spartans gaz'd: but ſoon their anxious looks
All on the great Leonidas unite,
Long known his country's refuge. He alone
Remains unſhaken. Riſing, he diſplays
His godlike preſence. Dignity and grace
Adorn his frame, where manly beauty joins
With ſtrength Herculean. On his aſpect ſhine
Sublimeſt virtue, and deſire of fame,
Where juſtice gives the laurel, in his eye
The inextinguiſhable ſpark, which fires
The ſouls of patriots; while his brow ſupports
Undaunted valour, and contempt of death.
Serene he caſt his looks around, and ſpake:
Why this aſtoniſhment on ev'ry face,
Ye men of Sparta? Does the name of death
Create this fear and wonder? O my friends,
Why do we labour through the arduous paths,
Which lead to virtue? Fruitleſs were the toil,
Above the reach of human feet were plac'd
The diſtant ſummit, if the fear of death
Could intercept our paſſage. But a frown
Of unavailing terror he aſſumes,
To ſhake the firmneſs of a mind, which knows
That, wanting virtue, life is pain and woe,
That, wanting liberty, ev'n virtue mourns,
And looks around for happineſs in vain.
Then ſpeak, O Sparta, and demand my life!
My heart, exulting, anſwers to thy call,
And ſmiles on glorious fate. To live with fame,
The gods allow to many; but to die
With equal luſtre is a bleſſing. Jove
Among the choiceſt of his boons reſerves,
Which but on few his ſparing hand beſtows.
Salvation thus to Sparta he proclaim'd.
Joy, wrapt awhile in admiration, paus'd,

Suſpending praiſe ; nor praiſe at laſt reſounds
In high acclaim to rend the arch of heav'n :
A reverential murmur breathes applauſe.
So were the pupils of Lycurgus train'd
To bridle nature. Public fear was dumb
Before their ſenate, ephori, and kings,
Nor exultation into clamour broke.
Amidſt them roſe Dieneces, and thus :
Haſte to Thermopylæ. To Xerxes ſhow
The diſcipline of Spartans, long renown'd
In rigid warfare, with enduring minds,
Which neither pain, nor want, nor danger bend.
Fly to the gate of Greece, which open ſtands
To ſlavery and rapine. They will ſhrink
Before your ſtandard, and their native ſeats
Reſume in abject Aſia. Arm, ye ſires,
Who with a growing race have bleſs'd the ſtate.
That race, your parents, gen'ral Greece forbid
Delay. Heav'n ſummons. Equal to the cauſe
A chief behold. Can Spartans aſk for more ?
Bold Alpheus next. Command my ſwift return
Amid the Iſthmian council, to declare
Your inſtant march. His dictates all approve.
Back to the Iſthmus he unweary'd ſpeeds.
Now from th' aſſembly, with majeſtic ſteps,
Forth moves their godlike king, with conſcious worth
His gen'rous boſom glowing. Such the port
Of his divine progenitor ; impell'd
By ardent virtue, ſo Alcides trod,
Invincible to face in horrid war
The triple form of Geryon, or againſt
The bulk of huge Antæus match his ſtrength.
Say Muſe, what heroes, by example fir'd,
Nor leſs by honour, offer'd now to bleed ?
Dieneces the foremoſt, brave and ſtaid,
Of vet'ran ſkill to range in martial fields,
Well-order'd lines of battle. Maron next,
Twin-born with Alpheus, ſhows his manly frame.
Him Agis follow'd, brother to the queen

Of great Leonidas, his friend in war,
His try'd companion. Graceful were his steps,
And gentle his demeanor. Still his soul
Preserv'd the purest virtue, though refin'd
By hearts unknown to Lacedemon's race.
High was his office. He, when Sparta's weal
Support and counsel from the gods requir'd,
Was sent the hallow'd messenger to learn
Their mystic will, in oracles declar'd,
From rocky Delphi, from Dodona's shade,
Or sea-encircled Delos, or the cell
Of dark Trophonius, round Bœotia known.
Three hundred more complete th' intrepid band,
Illustrious fathers all of gen'rous sons,
The future guardians of Laconia's state.
Then rose Megistias, leading forth his son
Young Menalippus, Not of Spartan blood
Were they. Megistias, heav'n enlighten'd seer,
Had left his native Acarnanian shore;
Along the border of Eurotas chose
His place of dwelling. For his worth receiv'd,
And hospitably cherish'd, he the wreath
Pontific bore in Lacedemon's camp;
Serene in danger, nor his sacred arm
From warlike toil secluding, nor untaught
To wield the sword, and poize the weighty spear.
But to his home Leonidas retir'd.
There, calm in secret thought he thus explor'd
His mighty soul, while nature in his breast
A short emotion rais'd. What [illegible]en grief,
What cold reluctance now unmans my heart,
And whispers that I fear? Can death dismay
Leonidas? Death, often seen and scorn'd,
When clad most dreadful in the battle's front?
Or to relinquish life in all its pride,
With all my honours blooming round my head,
Repines my soul, or rather to forsake,
Eternally forsake my weeping wife,
My infant offspring, and my faithful friends?

Leonidas, awake. Shall theſe withſtand
The publick ſafety? Hark! thy country calls,
O ſacred voice, I hear thee! At the ſound,
Reviving virtue brightens in my heart;
Fear vaniſhes before her. Death, receive
My unreluctant hand. Immortal Fame,
Thou too, attendant on my righteous fall,
With wings unweary'd wilt protect my tomb.
His virtuous ſoul the hero had confirm'd,
When Agis enter'd. If my tardy lips
(He thus began), have hitherto forborne
To bring their grateful tribute of applauſe,
Which, as a Spartan, to thy worth I owe,
Forgive the brother of thy queen. Her grief
Detain'd me from thee. O unequall'd man,
Though Lacedemon call thy prime regard,
Forget not her, ſole victim of diſtreſs
Amid the gen'ral ſafety! To aſſuage
Such pain, fraternal tenderneſs is weak.
The king embrac'd him, and reply'd: O beſt,
O deareſt man, conceive not, but my ſoul
To her is fondly bound, from whom my days
Their largeſt ſhare of happineſs deriv'd!
Can I, who yield my breath, leſt others mourn,
Leſt thouſands ſhould be wretched when ſhe pines,
More lov'd than any, though leſs dear than all,
Can I neglect her griefs? In future days,
If thou with grateful memory record
My name and fate, O Sparta, paſs not this
Unheeded by. To life, for thee reſign'd,
Knew not a painful hour to tire my ſoul,
Nor were they common joys I left behind.
So ſpake the patriot, and his heart o'erflow'd
In tend'reſt paſſion. Then in eager haſte
The faithful partner of his bed he ſought.
Amid her weeping children ſat the queen
Immoveable and mute. Her ſwimming eyes
Bent to the earth. Her arms were folded o'er

Her lab'ring boſom, blotted with her tears.
As when a duſky miſt involves the ſky,
The moon through all the dreary vapours ſpreads
The radiant veſture of her ſilver light
O'er the dull face of nature; ſo the queen,
Divinely graceful ſhining through her grief,
Brighten'd the cloud of woe. Her lord approach'd.
Soon, as in gentleſt phraſe his well-known voice
Awak'd her drooping ſpirit, for a time
Care was appeas'd. She lifts her languid head.
She gives this utt'rance to her tender thoughts:
O thou, whoſe preſence is my ſole delight;
If thus, Leonidas, thy looks and words
Can check the rapid current of diſtreſs,
How am I mark'd for miſery! How long!
When of life's journey leſs than half is paſs'd,
And I muſt hear thoſe calming ſounds no more,
Nor ſee that face which makes affliction ſmile.
This ſaid, returning grief o'erwhelms her breaſt.
Her orphan children, her devoted lord,
Pale, bleeding, breathleſs on the field of death,
Her ever-during ſolitude of woe,
All riſe in mingled horror to her ſight,
When thus in bitt'reſt agony ſhe ſpake:
O whither art thou going from my arms?
Shall I no more behold thee? Oh! no more,
In conqueſt clad, o'erſpread with glorious duſt,
Wilt thou return to greet thy native ſoil,
And find thy dwelling joyful! Ah! too brave,
Why would'ſt thou hurry to the dreary gates
Of death, uncall'd——Another might have bled,
Like thee a victim of Alcides' race,
Leſs dear to all, and Sparta been ſecure.
Now ev'ry eye with mine is drown'd in tears;
All with theſe babes lament a father loſt.
Alas, how heavy is our lot of pain!
Our ſighs muſt laſt, when ev'ry other breaſt
Exults in ſafety, purchas'd by our loſs.
Thou didſt not heed our anguiſh—didſt not ſeek

One pauſe for my inſtruction how to bear
Thy endleſs abſence, or like thee to die.
Unutterable ſorrow here confin'd
Her voice. Theſe words Leonidas return'd:
I ſee, I ſhare thy agony. My ſoul
Ne'er knew how warm the prevalence of love,
How ſtrong a parent's feelings, till this hour;
Nor was ſhe once inſenſible to thee
In all her fervour to aſſert my fame.
How had the honours of my name been ſtain'd
By heſitation? Shameful life preferr'd
By an inglorious colleague would have left
No choice, but what were infamy to ſhun,
Not virtue to accept. Then deem no more,
That of thy love regardleſs, or thy tears,
I ruſh, uncall'd, to death. The voice of fate,
The gods, my fame, my country preſs my doom.
Oh! thou dear mourner! Wherefore ſwells afreſh
That tide of woe? Leonidas muſt fall.
Alas! far heavier miſery impends
O'er thee and theſe, if, ſoften'd by thy tears,
I ſhamefully refuſe to yield that breath,
Which juſtice, glory, liberty, and heav'n
Claim for my country, for my ſons and thee.
Think on my long unalter'd love. Reflect
On my paternal fondneſs. Hath my heart
Ee'r known a pauſe in love, or pious care?
Now ſhall that care, that tenderneſs be ſhown
Moſt warm, moſt faithful. When thy huſband dies
For Lacedemon's ſafety, thou wilt ſhare,
Thou and thy children the diffuſive good.
I am ſelected by th' immortal gods
To ſave a people. Should my timid heart
That ſacred charge abandon, I ſhould plunge
Thee too in ſhame, in ſorrow. Thou wouldſt mourn
With Lacedemon; wouldſt with her ſuſtain
Thy painful portion of oppreſſion's weight.
Behold thy ſons now worthy of their name,
Their Spartan birth. Their glowing bloom would pine

Depreſs'd, diſhonour'd, and their youthful hearts
Beat at the ſound of liberty no more.
On their own merit, on their father's fame,
When he the Spartan freedom hath confirm'd,
Before the world illuſtrious will they riſe,
Their country's bulwark, and their mother's joy.
Here paus'd the patriot. In religious awe
Grief heard the voice of virtue. No complaint
The ſolemn ſilence broke. Tears ceas'd to flow;
Ceas'd for a moment ſoon again to ſtream.
Behold, in arms before the palace drawn,
His brave companions of the war demand
Their leader's preſence. Then her griefs renew'd,
Surpaſſing utt'rance, intercept her ſighs.
Each accent freezes on her falt'ring tongue.
In ſpeechleſs anguiſh on the hero's breaſt
She ſinks. On ev'ry ſide his children preſs,
Hang on his knees, and kiſs his honour'd hand.
His ſoul no longer ſtruggles to confine
Her agitation. Down the hero's cheek,
Down flows the manly ſorrow. Great in woe
Amid his children, who encloſe him round,
He ſtands indulging tenderneſs and love
In graceful tears, when thus with lifted eyes,
Addreſs'd to heav'n. Thou ever-living pow'r,
Look down propitious, fire of gods and men;
O to this faithful woman, whoſe deſert
May claim thy favour, grant the hours of peace!
And thou, my bright forefather, ſeed of Jove,
O Hercules, neglect not theſe thy race!
But ſince that ſpirit, I from thee derive,
Tranſports me from them to reſiſtleſs fate,
Be thou their guardian! Teach them like thyſelf
By glorious labours to embelliſh life,
And from their father let them learn to die.
Here ending, forth he iſſues, and aſſumes
Before the ranks his ſtation of command.
They now proceed. So mov'd the hoſt of heav'n
On Phlegra's plains to meet the giant ſons

Down the hero's cheek
Profuse the manly sorrow. Great in woe
Amid his children who endeavour round
He stands, including tenderness and love
In graceful form.
Glover. Vide Leonidas Book 1 line 350 Book 5th
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Of Earth and Titan. From Olympus march'd
The deities embattled; while their king
Tower'd in the front with thunder in his graſp.
Thus through the ſtreets of Lacedemon paſs'd
Leonidas. Before his footſteps bow
The multitude exulting. On he treads
Rever'd. Unſated, their enraptur'd ſight
Purſues his graceful ſtature, and their tongues
Extol and hail him as their guardian god.
Firm in his nervous hand he gripes the ſpear.
Low as the ankles, from his ſhoulders hangs
The maſſy ſhield; and o'er his burniſh'd helm
The purple plumage nods. Harmonious youths,
Around whoſe brows entwining laurels play,
In lofty-ſounding ſtrains his praiſe record;
While ſnowy-finger'd virgins all the way
Beſtrew with od'rous garlands. Now his breaſt
Is all poſſeſs'd by glory, which diſpell'd,
What'er of grief remain'd, or vain regret
For thoſe he left behind. The rev'rend train
Of Lacedemon's ſenate laſt appear
To take their final, ſolemn leave, and grace
Their hero's parting ſteps. Around him flow
In civil pomp their venerable robes,
Mix'd with the blaze of arms. The ſhining troop
Of warriors preſs behind him. Maron here
With Menalippus warm in flow'ry prime,
There Agis, there Megiſtias, and the chief,
Dieneces. Laconia's dames aſcend
The loftieſt manſions; thronging o'er the roofs
Applaud their ſons, their huſbands as they march:
So parted Argo from th' Colchian ſtrand
To plough the foaming ſurge. Theſſalia's nymphs,
Rang'd on the cliffs, o'erſhading Neptune's face,
Still on the diſtant veſſel fix'd their eyes
Admiring, ſtill in pæans bleſs'd the helm,
By Greece intruſted with her choſen ſons
For high adventures on the Colchian ſhore.

Swift on his courſe Leonidas proceeds.
Soon is Eurotas paſs'd, and Lerna's bank,
Where his victorious anceſtor ſubdu'd
The many headed Hydra, and the lake
To endleſs fame conſign'd. Th' unweary'd bands
Next through the pines of Mænalus he led,
And down Parthenius urg'd the rapid toil.
Six days inceſſant was their march purſu'd,
When to their ear the hoarſe-reſounding waves
Beat on the Iſthmus. Here the tents are ſpread.
Below the wide horizon then the ſun
Had dipt his beamy locks. The queen of night
Gleam'd from the centre of th' ethereal vault,
And o'er the raven plumes of darkneſs ſhed
Her placid light. Leonidas detains
Dieneces and Agis. Open ſtands
The tall pavilion, and admits the moon.
As here they ſit converſing, from the hill,
Which roſe before them, one of noble port
Is ſeen deſcending. Lightly down the ſlope
He treads. He calls aloud. They heard, they knew
The voice of Alpheus, whom the king addreſs'd.
O thou, with ſwiftneſs by the gods endu'd
To match the ardour of thy daring ſoul,
What from the Iſthmus draws thee? Do the Greeks
Neglect to arm and face the public foe?
Good news give wings, ſaid Alpheus, Greece is arm'd.
The neighb'ring Iſthmus holds th' Arcadian bands.
From Mantinea Diophantus leads
Five hundred ſpears; nor leſs from Tegea's walls
With Hegeſander move. A thouſand more,
Who in Orchomenus reſide, and range
Along Parrhaſius, or Cyllene's brow;
Who near the foot of Erymanthus dwell,
Or on Alphean banks, with various chiefs
Expect thy preſence. Moſt is Clonius fam'd,
Of ſtature huge, unſhaken rock of war.
Four hundred warriors brave Alcmæon draws
From ſtately Corinth's tow'rs. Two hundred march

From Philus. Them Eupalamus commands.
An equal number of Mycenæ's race
Ariſtobulus heads. Through fear alone
Of thee, and threat'ning Greece the Thebans arm.
A few in Thebes authority and rule
Uſurp. Corrupted with Barbarian gold,
They quench the gen'rous, eleutherian flame
In ev'ry heart. The eloquent theye bribe.
By ſpecious tales the multitude they cheat,
Eſtabliſhing baſe meaſures on the plea
Of public ſafety. Others are immers'd
In all the ſloth of plenty, who unmov'd
In ſhameful eaſe, behold the ſtate betray'd.
Aw'd by thy name, four hundred took the field.
The wily Anaxander is their chief
With Leontiades. To ſee their march
I ſtaid, then haſten'd to ſurvey the ſtreights,
Which thou ſhalt render ſacred to renown.
For ever mingled with the crumbling ſoil,
Which moulders round th' indented Malian coaſt,
The ſea rolls ſlimy. On a ſolid rock,
Which forms the inmoſt limit of a bay,
Thermopylæ is ſtretch'd. Where broadeſt ſpread,
It meaſures threeſcore paces, bounded here
By the ſalt ooze, which underneath preſents
A dreary ſurface; there the lofty cliffs
Of woody'd Oeta overlook the paſs,
And far beyond o'er half the ſurge below
Their horrid umbrage caſt. Acroſs the mouth
An ancient bulwark of the Phocians ſtands,
A wall with gates and tow'rs. The Locrian force
Was marching forward. Them I paſs'd to greet
Demophilus of Theſpia, who had pitch'd
Seven hundred ſpears before th' important fence.
His brother's ſon attends the rev'rend chief,
Young Dithyrambus. He for noble deeds,
Yet more for temperance of mind renown'd,
In early bloom with brighteſt honours ſhines,
Nor wantons in the blaze. Here Agis ſpake:

Well haſt thou painted that illuſtrious youth.
He is my hoſt at Theſpia. Though adorn'd
With various wreaths, by fame, by fortune-bleſs'd,
His gentle virtues take from Envy's lips
Their blaſting venom; and her baneful eye
Strives on his worth to ſmile. In ſilence all
Again remain, when Alpheus thus proceeds:
Platæa's choſen veterans I ſaw,
Small in their number, matchleſs in their fame.
Diomedon the leader. Keen his ſword
At Marathon was felt, where Aſia bled.
Theſe guard Thermopylæ. Among the hills,
Unknown to ſtrangers winds an upper ſtreight,
Which by a thouſand Phocians is ſecur'd.
Ere theſe brave Greeks I quitted, in the bay
A ſtately chieftain of th' Athenian fleet
Arriv'd. I join'd him. Copious in thy praiſe
He utter'd rapture, but auſterely blam'd
Laconia's tardy counſels; while the ſhips
Of Athens long had ſtemm'd Eubœan tides,
Which flow not diſtant from our future poſt.
This was the far fam'd Æſchylus, by Mars,
By Phœbus lov'd. Parnaſſus him proclaims
The firſt of Attic poets, him the plains
Of Marathon a ſoldier, try'd in arms.
Well may Athenians murmur, ſaid the king.
Too long hath Sparta ſlumber'd on her ſhield.
By morn, beyond the Iſthmus we will ſpread
A gen'rous banner. In Laconian ſtrains
Of Alcman and Terpander lives the fame
Of our forefathers. Let our deeds attract
The brighter muſe of Athens in the ſong
Of Æſchylus divine. Now frame thy choice.
Share in our fate; or, haſtening home report,
How much already thy diſcerning mind,
Thy active limbs have merited from me,
How ſerv'd thy country. From the impatient lips
Of Alpheus, ſwift theſe fervid accents broke:

I have not meaſur'd ſuch a tract of land,
Have not untir'd beheld the ſetting ſun,
Nor through the ſhade of midnight urg'd my ſteps
To animate the Grecians, that myſelf
Might be exempt from warlike toil, or death.
Return! Ah! no. A ſecond time my ſpeed
Shall viſit thee, Thermopylæ. My limbs
Shall at thy ſide, Leonidas, obtain
An honourable grave. And oh! amid
His country's perils, if a Spartan breaſt
May feel a private ſorrow, fierce revenge
I ſeek not only for th' inſulted ſtate,
But for a brother's wrongs. A younger hope,
Than I and Maron, bleſs'd our father's years,
Child of his age, and Polydorus nam'd.
His mind, while tender in his op'ning prime,
Was bent to ſtrenuous virtue. Gen'rous ſcorn
Of pain, or danger taught his early ſtrength
To ſtruggle patient with ſevereſt toils.
Oft, when inclement winter chill'd the air,
When frozen ſhow'rs had ſwoln Eurotas' ſtream,
Amid th' impetuous channel would he plunge
To breaſt the torrent. On a fatal day,
As in the ſea his active limbs he bath'd,
A ſavage corſair of the Perſian king
My brother naked and defenceleſs bore,
E'en in my ſight, to Aſia; there to waſte
With all the promiſe of its growing worth
His youth in bondage. Tedious were the tale,
Should I recount my pains, my father's woes,
The days he wept, the ſleepleſs nights he beat
His aged boſom. And ſhall Alpheus' ſpear
Be abſent from Thermopylæ, nor claim,
O Polydorus, vengeance for thy wrongs
In that firſt ſlaughter of the barb'rous foe.
Here interpos'd Dieneces. Their hands
He graſp'd, and cordial tranſport thus expreſt:
O that Lycurgus from the ſhades might riſe
To praiſe the virtue which his laws inſpire!

Thus till the dead of night theſe heroes paſs'd
The hours in friendly converſe, and enjoy'd
Each other's virtue. Happieſt of men!
At length with gentle heavineſs the pow'r
Of ſleep invades their eye-lids, and conſtrains
Their magnanimity and zeal to reſt:
When ſliding down the hemiſphere, the moon
Immers'd in midnight ſhade her ſilver head.

BOOK II.

The Argument.

LEONIDAS, on his approach to the Isthmus, is met by the leaders of the troops, sent from other Grecian states, and by the deputies who composed the Isthmian council. He harangues them; then proceeds in conjunction with these forces towards Thermopylæ. On the first day he is joined by Dithyrambus; on the third he reaches a valley in Locris, where he is entertained by Oileus, the public host of the Lacedæmonian state; and the next morning is accompanied by him in a car to the temple of Pan; he finds Medon there, the son of Oileus, and commander of two thousand Locrians, already posted at Thermopylæ, and by him is informed, that the army of Xerxes is in sight of the pass.

AURORA spreads her purple beams around,
When move the Spartans, Their approach is known.
The Isthmian council, and the diff'rent chiefs,
Who lead th' auxiliar bands, advance to meet
Leonidas; Eupalamus the strong,
Alcmæon, Clonius, Diophantus brave
With Hegesander. At their head is seen
Aristobulus, whom Mycenæ's ranks
Obey Mycenæ once august in pow'r,
In splendid wealth, and vaunting still the name
Of Agamemnon. To Laconia's king
The chieftain spake. Leonidas, survey
Mycenæ's race. Should ev'ry other Greek
Be aw'd by Xerxes, and his eastern host,
Believe not we can fear, deriv'd from those,
Who once conducted o'er the foaming surge
The strength of Greece; who desert left the fields
Of ravag'd Asia, and her proudest walls
From their foundations levell'd to the ground.
Leonidas replies not, but his voice
Directs to all. Illustrious warriors, hail!
Who thus undaunted signalize your faith,
Your gen'rous ardour in the common cause.
But you, whose counsels prop the Grecian state,
O venerable synod, who consign
To our protecting sword the gate of Greece,
Thrice hail! Whate'er by valour we obtain,
Your wisdom must preserve. With piercing eyes

Contemplate ev'ry city, and discern
Their various tempers. Some with partial care
To guard their own, neglect the public weal.
Unmov'd and cold are others. Terror here,
Corruption there presides. O fire the brave
To gen'ral efforts in the gen'ral cause.
Confirm the wav'ring. Animate the cold,
The timid. Watch the faithless. Some betray
Themselves and Greece. Their perfidy prevent,
Or call them back to honour. Let us all
Be link'd in sacred union, and this land
May face the world's whole multitude in arms.
If for the spoil, by Paris borne to Troy,
A thousand keels the Hellespont o'erspread;
Shall not again confederated Greece
Be rous'd to battle, and to freedom give
What once she gave to fame? Behold, we haste
To stop th' invading tyrant. Till we fall,
He shall not pour his myriads on your plains.
But as the gods conceal how long our strength
May stand unvanquish'd, or how soon may yield;
Waste not a moment, till consenting Greece
Range all her free-born numbers in the field.
Leonidas concluded. Awful stepp'd
Before the sage assembly one supreme
And old in office, who address'd the king.
Thy bright example ev'ry heart unites.
From thee her happiest omens Greece derives
Of concord, safety, liberty, and fame.
Go then, O first of mortals, go, impress
Amaze and terror on the barb'rous host;
The free-born Greeks instructing life to deem
Less dear than honour, and their country's cause.
This heard, Leonidas, thy secret soul,
Exulting, taste of the sweet reward
Due to thy name through endless time. Once more
His eyes he turn'd, and view'd in rapt'rous thought
His native land, which he alone can save;
Then summon'd all his majesty, and o'er

The Iſthmus trod. The phalanx moves behind
In deep arrangement. So th' imperial ſhip
With ſtately bulk along the heaving tide
In military pomp conducts the pow'r
Of ſome proud navy, bounding from the port
To bear the vengeance of a mighty ſtate
Againſt a tyrant's walls. Till ſultry noon
They march; when halting, as they take repaſt,
Acroſs the plain before them they deſcry
A troop of Theſpians. One above the reſt
In eminence precedes. His glitt'ring ſhield,
Whoſe gold-emblazon'd orb collects the beams,
Caſt by meridian Phœbus from his throne
Flames like another ſun. A ſnowy plume,
With wanton curls diſporting in the breeze,
Floats o'er his dazzling caſque. On nearer view
Beneath the radiant honours of his creſt
A countenance of youth in roſy prime,
And manly ſweetneſs won the fix'd regard
Of each beholder. With a modeſt grace
He came reſpectful tow'rd the king, and ſhow'd,
That all ideas of his own deſert
Were ſunk in veneration. So the god
Of night ſalutes his empyreal ſire;
When from his altar in th' embow'ring grove
Of balmy Delos, or the hallow'd bound
Of Tenedos, or Claros, where he hears
In hymns his praiſes from the ſons of men,
He reaſcends the high, Olympian ſeats:
Such reverential homage on his brow,
O'erſhading, ſoftens his effulgent bloom
With lovelineſs and grace. The king receives
Th' illuſtrious Theſpian thus. My willing tongue
Would ſtyle thee Dithyrambus. Thou doſt bear
All in thy aſpect to become that name,
Renown'd for worth and valour. O reveal
Thy birth, thy charge. Whoe'er thou art, my ſoul
Deſires to know thee, and would call thee friend.
To him the youth. O bulwark of our weal,

My name is Dithyrambus; which the lips
Of ſome benevolent, ſome gen'rous friend
To thee have ſounded in a partial ſtrain,
And thou haſt heard with favour. In thy ſight
I ſtand, deputed by the Theſpian chief,
The Theban, Locrian, by the fam'd in war,
Diomedon, to haſten thy approach.
Three days will bring the hoſtile pow'rs in view.
He ſaid. The ready ſtandards are uprear'd.
By zeal enforc'd, till ev'ning ſhadows fall,
The march continues, then by day-ſpring ſweeps
The earlieſt dews. The van, by Agis led,
Diſplays the griſly face of battle rough
With ſpears obliquely trail'd in dreadful length
Along th' indented way. Beſide him march'd
His gallant Theſpian hoſt. The centre boaſts
Leonidas the leader, who retains
The good Megiſtias near him. In the rear
Dieneces commanded, who in charge
That Menalippus, offspring of his friend,
For theſe inſtructions. Let thine eye, young man,
Dwell on the order of our varying march;
As champain, valley, mountain, or defile
Require a change. The eaſtern tyrant thus
Conducts not his Barbarians like the ſands
In number. Yet the diſcipline of Greece
They will encounter feeble, as the ſands,
Daſh'd on a rock, and ſcatter'd in their fall.
To him th' inquiring youth. The martial tread,
The flute's ſlow warble, both in juſt accord,
Entrance my ſenſes; but let wonder aſk,
Why is that tender vehicle of ſound
Preferr'd in war by Sparta? Other Greeks
To more ſonorous muſic ruſh in fight.
Son of my friend, Dieneces rejoins,
Well doſt thou note. I praiſe thee. Sparta's law
With human paſſions, ſource of human woes,
Maintains perpetual ſtrife. She ſternly curbs
Our infant hearts, till paſſion yields its ſeat

To principle and order. Muſic too,
By Spartans lov'd, is temper'd by the law;
Still to her plan ſubſervient melts in notes,
Which cool and ſooth, not irritate and warm.
Thus by habitual abſtinence, apply'd
To ev'ry ſenſe, ſuppreſſing nature's fire,
By modes of duty, not by ardour ſway'd,
O'er each impetuous enemy abroad,
At home o'er vice and pleaſure we prevail.
O might I merit a Laconian name!
The Acarnanian anſwer'd. But explain,
What is the land we traverſe? What the hill,
Whoſe parted ſummit in a ſpacious void
Admits a bed of clouds; And gracious tell,
Whoſe are thoſe ſuits of armour which I ſee
Borne by two Helots? At the queſtions pleas'd,
Dieneces continues. Thoſe belong
To Alpheus and his brother. Light of foot
They, diſencumber'd, all at large precede
This pond'rous band. They guide a troop of ſlaves,
Our miſſile-weapon'd Helots, to obſerve,
Provide, forewarn, and obſtacles remove.
This tract is Phocis. That divided hill
Is fam'd Parnaſſus. Thence the voice divine
Was ſent by Phœbus, ſummoning to death
The king of Sparta. From his fruitful blood
A crop will ſpring of victory to Greece.
And theſe three hundred high in birth and rank
All citizens of Sparta . . . . cries the youth,
They all muſt bleed, Dieneces ſubjoins,
All with their leader. So the law decrees.
To him with earneſt looks the gen'rous youth.
Wilt thou not place me in that glorious hour
Cloſe to thy buckler? Gratitude will brace
Thy pupil's arm to manifeſt the force
Of thy inſtruction. Menalippus, no,
Return'd the chief. Not thou of Spartan breed,
Nor call'd to periſh. Thou unwedded too
Would'ſt leave no race behind thee. Live to praiſe,

Live to enjoy our ſalutary fall.
Reply is needleſs. See, the ſun deſcends.
The army halts, I truſt thee with a charge,
Son of Megiſtias. In my name command
Th' attendant Helots to erect our camp.
We pitch our tents in Locris. Quick the youth
His charge accompliſh'd. From a gen'rous meal,
Where at the call of Alpheus, Locris ſhow'r'd
Her Amalthean plenty on her friends,
The fated warriors ſoon in ſlumber loſe
The memory of toil. His watchful round
Dieneces with Menalippus takes.
The moon rode high and clear. Her light benign
To their pleas'd eyes a rural dwelling ſhow'd,
All unadorn'd, but ſeemly. Either ſide
Was fenc'd by trees high-ſhadowing. The front
Look'd on a cryſtal pool, by feather'd tribes
At ev'ry dawn frequented. From the ſprings
A ſmall redundance fed a ſhallow brook,
O'er ſmootheſt pebbles rippling juſt to wake,
Not ſtartle ſilence, and the ear of night
Entice to liſten undiſturb'd. Around
The graſs was cover'd by repoſing ſheep,
Whoſe drowſy guard no longer bay'd the moon.
The warriors ſtopp'd, contemplating the ſeat
Of rural quiet. Suddenly a ſwain
Steps forth. His fingers touch the breathing reed.
Upriſe the fleecy train. Each faithful dog
Is rous'd. All heedful of the wonted ſound
Their known conductor follow. Slow behind
Th' obſerving warriors move. Ere long they reach
A broad and verdant circle, thick enclos'd
With birches ſtrait and tall, whoſe gloſſy rind
Is clad in ſilver from Diana's car.
The ground was holy, and the central ſpot
An altar bore to Pan. Beyond the orb
Of ſkreening trees th' external circuit ſwarm'd
With ſheep and beeves, each neighb'ring hamlet's
wealth

Collected. Thither ſoon the ſwain arriv'd,
Whom, by the name of Melibœus hail'd,
A peaſant throng ſurrounded. As their chief,
He nigh the altar to his rural friends
Addreſs'd theſe words: O ſent from diff'rent lords
With contribution to the public wants,
Time preſſes. God of peaſants, bleſs our courſe!
Speed to the flow-pac'd ox, for once impart!
That o'er theſe valleys, cool'd by dewy night,
We to our ſummons true, ere noon-tide blaze
May join Oileus, and his praiſe obtain.
He ceas'd. To ruſtic madrigals and pipes,
Combin'd with bleating notes and tinkling bells,
With clamour ſhrill from buſy tongues of dogs,
Or hollow-ſounding from the deep-mouth'd ox,
Along the valley herd and flock are driv'n
Succeſſive, halting oft to harmleſs ſpoil
Of flow'rs and herbage, ſpringing in their ſight.
While Melibœus marſhall'd with addreſs
The inoffenſive hoſt, unſeen in ſhades
Dieneces applauded, and the youth
Of Menalippus caution'd. Let no word
Impede the careful peaſant. On his charge
Depends our welfare. Diligent and ſtaid
He ſuits his godlike maſter. Thou wilt ſee
That righteous hero ſoon. Now ſleep demands
Our debt to nature. On a carpet dry
Of moſs, beneath a wholeſome beech they lay,
Arm'd as they were. Their ſlumber ſhort retires
With nights laſt ſhadow. At their warning rous'd,
The troops proceed. Th' admiring eye of youth
In Menalippus caught the morning rays
To guide its travel o'er the lanſcape wide
Of cultivated hillocks, dales and lawns,
Where manſions, hamlets interpos'd; where domes
Roſe to their gods through conſecrated ſhades.
He then exclaims. O ſay, can Jove devote
Theſe fields to ravage, thoſe abodes to flames?
The Spartan anſwers: Ravage, ſword and fire

Muſt be endur'd as incidental ills.
Suffice it, theſe invaders, ſoon or late,
Will leave this ſoil more fertile by their blood,
With ſpoils abundant to rebuild the fanes.
Precarious benefits are theſe, thou ſee'ſt
So fram'd by heav'n; but virtue is a good
No foe can ſpoil, and laſting to the grave.
Beſide the public way an oval fount
Of marble ſparkled with a ſilver ſpray
Of falling rills, collected from above.
The army halted, and their hollow caſques
Dipp'd in the limpid ſtream. Behind it roſe
An edifice, compos'd of native roots,
And oaken trunks of knotted girth unwrought.
Within were beds of moſs. Old, batter'd arms
Hung from the roof. The curious chiefs approach
Theſe words, engraven on a tablet rude,
Megiſtias reads; the reſt in ſilence hear.
" Yon marble fountain, by Oileus plac'd,
" To thirſty lips in living water flows;
" For weary ſteps he fram'd this cool retreat;
" A grateful off'ring here to rural peace,
" His dinted ſhield, his helmet he reſign'd.
" O paſſenger, if born to noble deeds
" Thou would'ſt obtain perpetual grace from Jove,
" Devote thy vigour to heroic toils,
" And thy decline to hoſpitable cares.
" Reſt here; then ſeek Oileus in his vale.
O Jove, burſt forth Leonidas, thy grace
Is large and various. Length of days and bliſs
To him thou giv'ſt, to me a ſhorten'd term,
Nor yet leſs happy. Grateful we confeſs
Thy diff'rent bounties, meaſur'd full to both.
Come let us ſeek Oileus in his vale.
The word is giv'n. The heavy phalanx moves.
The light-pac'd Helots long ere morning dawn'd,
Had recommenc'd their progreſs. They o'ertook
Blithe Melibœus in a ſpacious vale,
The fruitfulleſt in Locris, ere the ſun

Shot forth his noon-tide beams. On either side
A surface scarce perceptibly ascends.
Luxuriant vegetation crowds the soil
With trees close-rang'd and mingling. Rich the loads
Of native fruitage to the sight reveal
Their vig'rous nurture. There the flushing peach,
The apple, citron, almond, pear, and date,
Pomegranates, purple mulberry, and fig
From interlacing branches mix their hues
And scents, the passenger's delight; but leave
In the mid vale a pasture long and large,
Exuberant in vivid verdure cropp'd
By herds, by flocks innum'rous. Neighb'ring knolls
Are speckled o'er with cots, whose humble roofs
To herdsmen, shepherds, and laborious hinds
Once yielded rest unbroken, till the name
Of Xerxes shook their quiet. Yet this day
Was festive. Swains and damsels, youth and age,
From toil, from home enlarg'd, disporting, fill'd
The enliven'd meadow. Under ev'ry shade
A hoary minstrel sat; the maidens danc'd,
Flocks bleated; oxen low'd; the horses neigh'd;
With joy the vale resounded; terror fled;
Leonidas was nigh. The welcome news
By Meliboeus, haste'ning to his lord,
Was loudly told. The Helots too appear'd.
While with his brother Alpheus thus discours'd.
  In this fair valley old Oileus dwells,
The first of Locrians, of Laconia's state
The public host. Yon large pavilions mark.
They promise welcome. Thither let us bend,
There tell our charge. This said, they both advance.
A hoary band receives them. One, who seem'd
In rank, in age superior, wav'd his hand
To Meliboeus, standing near, and spake.
  By this my faithful messenger I learn,
That you are friends. Nor yet th' invader's foot
Hath pass'd our confines. Else, o'ercast by time,

My ſight would ſcarce diſtinguiſh friend or foe,
A Grecian or Barbarian. Alpheus then.
We come from Lacedemon, of our king
Leonidas forerunners. Is he nigh?
The cordial ſenior tenderly exclaims,
I am Oileus. Him a beardleſs boy
I knew in Lacedemon. Twenty years
Are ſince elaps'd. He ſcarce remembers me.
But I will feaſt him, as becomes my zeal,
Him and his army. You, my friends, repoſe.
They ſit. He ſtill diſcourſes. Spartan gueſts,
In me an aged ſoldier you behold.
From Ajax, fam'd in Agamemnon's war,
Oilean Ajax flows my vital ſtream,
Unmix'd with his preſumption. I have borne
The higheſt functions in the Locrian ſtate,
Not with diſhonour. Self-diſmiſs'd, my age
Hath in this valley on my own demeſne
Liv'd tranquil, not recluſe. My comrades theſe,
Old magiſtrates and warriors like myſelf,
Releas'd from public care, with me retir'd
To rural quiet. Through our laſt remains
Of time in ſweet garrulity we ſlide,
Recounting paſt achievements of our prime;
Nor wanting lib'ral means for lib'ral deeds,
Here bleſs'd, here bleſſing we reſide. Theſe flocks,
Theſe herds and paſtures, theſe our num'rous hinds,
And poverty, hence exil'd, may divulge
Our generous abundance. We can ſpread
A banquet for an army. By the ſtate
Once more entreated, we accept a charge,
To age well-ſuited. By our watchful care
The goddeſs Plenty in your tents ſhall dwell.
He ſcarce had finiſh'd, when the enſigns broad
Of Lacedemon's phalanx down the vale
Were ſeen to wave, unfolding at the ſound
Of flutes, ſoft warbling in th' expreſſive mood
Of Dorian ſweetneſs unadorn'd. Around,
In notes of welcome ev'ry ſhepherd tun'd

His ſprightly reed. The damſels ſhow'd their hair,
Diverſify'd with flow'rets. Garlands gay,
Ruſh-woven baſkets, glowing with the dyes
Of amarinths, of jaſmin, roſes, pinks,
And violets they carry, tripping light
Before the ſteps of grimly-featur'd Mars
To blend the ſmiles of Flora with his frown.
Leonidas they chaunt in ſylvan lays,
Him the defender of their meads and groves,
Him more than Pan, a guardian to their flocks.
While Philomela, in her poplar ſhade
Awaken'd, ſtrains her emulating throat,
And joins with liquid trills the ſwelling ſounds.
Behold Oileus and his ancient train
Accoſt Laconia's king, whoſe looks and words
Confeſs remembrance of the Locrian chief.
Thrice hail! Oileus, Sparta's noble hoſt.
Thou art of old acquainted with her ſons,
Their laws, their manners. Muſical as brave,
Train'd to delight in ſmooth Terpander's lay,
In Alcman's Dorian meaſure, we enjoy
In thy melodious vale th' unlabour'd ſtrains
Of rural pipes, to nightingales attun'd.
Our heart-felt gladneſs deems the golden age
Subſiſting where thou govern'ſt. Still theſe tones
Of joy continu'd, may thy dwelling here!
Still may this plenty, unmoleſted, crown
The favour'd diſtrict! May thy rev'rend duſt
Have peaceful ſhelter in thy father's tomb!
Kind heav'n, that merit to my ſword impart!
By joy uplifted, forth Oileus broke.
Thou doſt recal me then! O ſent to guard
Theſe fruits from ſpoil, theſe hoary locks from ſhame,
Permit thy weary'd ſoldiers to partake
Of Locrian plenty. Enter thou my tents,
Thou and thy captains. I ſalute them all.
The hero full of dignity and years,
Once bold in action, placed now in eaſe,
E'en by his look, benignly caſt around,

Gives laſſitude relief. With native grace,
With heart-effus'd complacency the king
Accepts the lib'ral welcome, while his troops,
To relaxation and repaſt diſmiſs'd,
Pitch on the wounded green their briſtled ſpears.
Still is the evening. Under cheſnut ſhades
With interweaving poplars ſpacious ſtands
A well-fram'd tent. There calm the heroes ſit,
The genial board enjoy, and feaſt the mind
On ſage diſcourſe; which thus Oileus clos'd.
Behold, night lifts her ſignal to invoke
That friendly god, who owns the drowſy wand.
To Mercury this laſt libation flows.
Farewel till morn. They ſeparate, they ſleep
All but Oileus, who forſakes the tent.
On Melibœus, in theſe words he calls.
Approach my faithful friend. To him the ſwain.
Thy bondman hears thy call. The chief replies,
Loud for the gath'ring peaſantry to heed.
Come, Melibœus, it is ſurely time,
That my repeated gift, the name of friend
Thou ſhouldſt accept. The name of bondman wounds
My ear. Be free. No longer, beſt of men,
Reject that boon, nor let my feeble head,
To thee a debtor, as to gracious heaven,
Deſcend and ſleep unthankful in the grave.
Though yielding nature daily feels decay;
Thou doſt prevent all care. The gods eſtrange
Pain from my pillow, have ſecur'd my breaſt
From weeds too oft in aged ſoil profuſe,
From ſelf-tormenting petulance and pride,
From jealouſy and envy at the fame
Of younger men. Leonidas will dim
My former luſtre, as that ſilver orb
Outſhines the meaneſt ſtar; and I rejoice.
O Melibœus, theſe elect of Jove
To certain death advance. Immortal powers!
How ſocial, how endearing is their ſpeech!
How flow in lib'ral cheerfulneſs their hearts!

To such a period verging men like these
Age well may envy, and that envy take
The genuine shape of virtue. Let their span
Of earthly being, while it lasts, contain
Each earthly joy. Till bless'd Elysium spread
Her ever-blooming, inexhausted stores
To their glad sight, be mine the grateful task
To drain my plenty. From the vaulted caves
Our vessels large of well-fermented wine,
From all our gran'ries lift the treasur'd corn.
Go, load the groaning axles. Nor forget
With garments new to greet Melissa's nymphs.
To her a triple change of vestments bear
With twenty lambs, and twenty speckled kids.
Be it your care, my peasants, some to aid
Him your director, others to select
Five hundred oxen, thrice a thousand sheep,
Of lusty swains a thousand. Let the morn,
When first she blushes, see my will perform'd.
They heard. Their lord's injunctions to fulfil
Was their ambition. He, unresting, mounts
A ready car. The coursers had enroll'd
His name in Isthmian and Nemean games.
By moonlight, floating on the splendid reins,
He o'er the busy vale intent is borne
From place to place, o'erlooks, directs, forgets
That he is old. Meantime the shades of night,
Retiring, wake Dieneces. He gives
The word. His pupil seconds. Ev'ry hand
Is arm'd. Day opens. Sparta's king appears.
Oileus greets him. In his radiant car
The senior stays reluctant; but his guest
So wills in Spartan reverence to age.
Then spake the Locrian. To assist thy camp
A chosen band of peasants I detach.
I trust thy valour. Doubt not thou my care,
Nor doubt that swain. Oileus, speaking, look'd
On Melibœus. Skilful he commands
These hinds. Him wife, him faithful I have prov'd

More than Eumæus to Laertes' ſon.
To him th' Oetæan woods, their devious tracks
Are known, each rill and fountain. Near the paſs
Two thouſand Locrians wilt thou find encamp'd,
My eldeſt born their leader, Medon nam'd,
Well exercis'd in arms. My daughter dwells
On Oeta. Sage Meliſſa ſhe is call'd,
Enlighten'd prieſteſs of the tuneful nine.
She haply may accoſt thee. Thou wilt lend
An ear. Not fruitleſs are Meliſſa's words.
Now, ſervants, bring the ſacred wine. Obey'd,
He, from his ſeat upriſing, thus proceeds:
Lo! from this chalice a libation pure
To Mars, to Grecian liberty and laws,
To their protector eleutherian Jove,
To his nine daughters, who record the brave,
To thy renown, Leonidas, I pour;
And take an old man's benediction too.
He ſtopp'd. Affection, ſtruggling in his heart,
Burſt forth again. Illuſtrious gueſt, afford
Another hour. That ſlender ſpace of time
Yield to my ſole poſſeſſion. While the troops,
Already glitt'ring down the dewy vale,
File through its narrow'd outlet; near my ſide
Deign to be carry'd, and my talk endure.
The king, well pleas'd, aſcends. Slow move the ſteeds
Behind the rear. Oileus graſps his hand,
Then in the fulneſs of his ſoul purſues.
Thy veneration for Laconia's laws
That I may ſtrengthen, may to rapture warm,
Hear me diſplay the melancholy fruits
Of lawleſs will. When o'er the Lydian plains
Th' innumerable tents of Xerxes ſpread,
His vaſſal Pythius, who in affluent means
Surpaſſes me, as that Barbarian prince
Thou doſt in virtue, entertain'd the hoſt,
And proffer'd all his treaſures. Theſe the king
Refuſing, e'en augmented from his own.

An act of fancy, not habitual grace,
A ſparkling vapour through the regal gloom
Of cruelty and pride. He now prepar'd
To march from Sardis, when with humble tears
The good old man beſought him. Let the king
Propitious hear a parent. In thy train
I have five ſons. Ah! leave my eldeſt born,
Thy future vaſſal, to ſuſtain my age!
The tyrant fell reply'd: Preſumptuous man,
Who art my ſlave, in this tremendous war,
Is not my perſon hazarded, my race,
My conſort? Former merit ſaves from death
Four of thy offspring. Him, ſo dearly priz'd,
Thy folly hath deſtroy'd. His body ſtraight
Was hewn aſunder. By the public way
On either ſide a bleeding half was caſt,
And millions paſs'd between. O Spartan king,
Taught to revere the ſanctity of laws,
The acts of Xerxes with thy own compare,
His fame with thine. The curſes of mankind
Give him renown. He marches to deſtroy,
But thou to ſave. Behold the trees are bent,
Each eminence is loaded thick with crowds,
From cots, from ev'ry hamlet pour'd abroad,
To bleſs thy ſteps, to celebrate thy praiſe.
Oft times the king his decent brow inclin'd,
Mute and obſequious to an elder's voice,
Which through th' inſtructed ear, unceaſing flow'd
In eloquence and knowledge. Scarce an hour
Was fled. The narrow dale was left behind.
A cauſeway broad diſclos'd an ancient pile
Of military fame. A trophy large,
Compact with creſted morions, targets rude,
With ſpears and corſlets, dimm'd by eating age,
Stood near a lake pellucid, ſmooth, profound,
Of circular expanſe, whoſe boſom ſhow'd
A green ſlop'd iſland, figur'd o'er with flow'rs,
And from its centre lifting high to view
A marble chapel, on the maſſy ſtrength

Of Doric columns rais'd. A full wrought freeze
Diſplay'd the ſculptor's art. In ſolemn pomp
Of obeliſks and buſts, and ſtory'd urns
Sepulchral manſions of illuſtrious dead
Were ſcatter'd round, o'ercaſt with ſhadows black
Of yew and cypreſs. In a ſerious note
Oïleus, pointing, opens new diſcourſe.
Beneath yon turf my anceſtors repoſe.
Oïlean Ajax ſingly was depriv'd
Of fun'ral honours there. With impious luſt
He ſtain'd Minerva's temple. From the gulf
Of briny waters by their god preſerv'd,
That god he brav'd. He lies beneath a rock,
By Neptune's trident in his wrath o'erturn'd.
Shut from Elyſium for a hundred years,
The hero's ghoſt bewail'd his oozy tomb.
A race more pious on the Oïlean houſe
Felicity had drawn. To ev'ry god
I owe my bliſs, my early fame to Pan.
Once on the margin of that ſilent pool
In their nocturnal camp Barbarians lay,
Awaiting morn to violate the dead.
My youth was fir'd. I ſummon'd from their cots
A ruſtic hoſt. We ſacrific'd to Pan,
Aſſail'd th' unguarded ruffians in his name.
He with his terrors ſmote their yielding hearts.
Not one ſurviv'd the fury of our ſwains.
Rich was the pillage. Hence that trophy roſe;
Of coſtly blocks conſtructed, hence that fane,
Inſcrib'd to Pan th' armipotent. O king,
Be to an old man's vanity benign.
This frowning emblem of terrific war
Proclaims the ardour and exploits of youth.
This, to Barbarian ſtrangers, ent'ring Greece,
Shows what I was. The marble fount thou ſaw'ſt,
Of living water, whoſe tranſparent flow
Reliev'd thy march in yeſter ſultry ſun,
The cell, which offer'd reſt on beds of moſs,
Show what I am, to Grecian neighbours ſhow

The hoſpitality of age. O age,
Where are thy graces, but in lib'ral deeds,
In bland deportment? Would thy furrow'd cheeks
Loſe the deformity of time? Let ſmiles
Dwell in thy wrinkles. Then, rever'd by youth,
Thy feeble ſteps will find——Abruptly here
He paus'd. A manly warrior full in ſight
Beſide the trophy on his target lean'd,
Unknown to Sparta's leader, who addreſs'd
His rev'rend hoſt. Thou pauſeſt. Let me aſk,
Whom do I ſee, reſembling in his form
A demigod? In tranſport then the ſage.
It is my ſon, diſcover'd by his ſhield,
Thy brave auxiliar Medon. He ſuſtains
My ancient honours in his native ſtate,
Which kindly choſe my offspring to replace
Their long-ſequeſter'd chief. Heart-winning gueſt!
My life, a tide of joy, which never knew
A painful ebb, beyond its wonted mark
Flows in thy converſe. Could a wiſh prevail,
My long and happy courſe ſhould finiſh here.
The chariot reſted. Medon now approach'd,
Saluting thus Leonidas: O king
Of warlike Sparta, Xerxes' hoſt in ſight
Begin to ſpread their multitude, and fill
The ſpacious Malian plain. The king replies:
Accept, illuſtrious meſſenger, my thanks.
With ſuch a brave aſſiſtant, as the ſon
Of great Oïleus, more aſſur'd I go
To face thoſe numbers. With this godlike friend
The father, now diſmounting from his car,
Embraces Medon. In a gliding bark
They all are wafted to the iſland fane,
Erected by Oïleus, and enrich'd
With his engrav'd achievements. Thence the eye
Of Sparta's gen'ral in extenſive ſcope
Contemplates each battalion, as they wind
Along the pool; whoſe limpid face reflects
Their weapons, gliſt'ning in the early ſun.

Them he to Pan armipotent commends,
His favour thus invoking. God, whose pow'r
By rumour vain, or Echo's empty voice
Can sink the valiant in desponding fear,
Can disarray whole armies, smile on these,
Thy worshippers. Thy own Arcadians guard.
Through thee Oïleus triumph'd. On his son,
On me look down. Our shields auxiliar join
Against profane Barbarians, who insult
The Grecian gods, and meditate the fall
Of this thy shrine. He said, and now intent
To leave the island, on Oïleus call'd.
He, Medon answer'd, by his joy and zeal
Too high transported, and discoursing long,
Felt on his drowsy lids a balmy down
Of heavines descending. He, unmark'd
Amid thy pious commerce with the god,
Was silently remov'd. The good old chief
On carpets rais'd by tender menial hands,
Calm in the secret sanctuary is laid.
His hast'ning step Leonidas restrains,
Thus fervent prays: O Maia's son best pleas'd,
When calling slumber to a virtuous eye,
Watch o'er my venerable friend. Thy balm
He wants, exhausted by his love to me.
Sweet sleep, thou soft'nest that intruding pang,
Which gen'rous breasts so parting must admit.
He said, embark'd, relanded. To his side
Inviting Medon, he rejoin'd the host.

BOOK III.

The Argument.

LEONIDAS arrives at Thermopylæ about noon on the fourth day of his departure from the Isthmus. He is received by Demophilus, the commander of Thespia, and by Anaxander the Theban, treacherously recommending Epialtes, a Malian, who seeks, by a pompous description of the Persian power, to intimidate the Grecian leaders, as they are viewing the enemy's camp from the top of mount Oeta. He is answered by Dieneces and Diomedon. Xerxes sends Tigranes and Phraortes to the Grecian camp, who are dismissed by Leonidas, and conducted back by Dithyrambus and Diomedon; which last, incensed at the arrogance of Tigranes, treats him with contempt and menaces. This occasions a challenge to single combat between Diomedon and Tigranes, Dithyrambus and Phraortes. Epialtes, after a conference with Anaxander, declares his intention of returning to Xerxes. Leonidas dispatches Agis with Menbœus, a faithful slave of Oileus, and high in the estimation of his lord, to view a body of Phocians, who had been posted at a distance from Thermopylæ for the defence of another pass in mount Oeta.

NOW in the van Leonidas appears,
With Medon still conferring. Hast thou heard,
He said, among th' innumerable foes
What chiefs are most distinguish'd? Might we trust
To fame, reply'd the Locrian, Xerxes boasts
His ablest, bravest counsellor and chief
In Artemisia, Caria's matchless queen.
To old Darius benefits had bound
Her lord, herself to Xerxes. Not compell'd,
Except by magnanimity, she leads
The best appointed squadron in his fleet.
No female softness Artemisia knows,
But in maternal love. Her widow'd hand
With equity and firmness for her son
Administers the sway. Of Doric race
She still retains the spirit, which from Greece
Her ancestors transplanted. Other chiefs
Are all Barbarians, little known to fame,
Save one, whom Sparta hath herself supply'd,
Not less than Demaratus, once her king,
An exile now. Leonidas rejoins.
Son of Oïleus, like thy father wise,
Like him partake my confidence. Thy words
Recal an era, sadd'ning all my thoughts.
That injur'd Spartan shar'd the regal sway

With one—Alas! my brother, eldeſt born,
Unbleſs'd by nature, favour'd by no god,
Cleomenes. Inſanity of mind,
Malignant paſſions, impious acts deform'd
A life, concluded by his own fell hand.
Againſt his colleague envious he ſuborn'd
Leutychides. Him perjury and fraud
Plac'd on the ſeat, by Demaratus held
Unſtain'd in luſtre. Here Oïleus' ſon.
My future ſervice only can repay
Thy confidential friendſhip. Let us cloſe
The gloomy theme. Thermopylæ is nigh.
Each face in tranſport glows. Now Oeta rear'd
His tow'ring forehead. With impatient ſteps
On ruſh'd the phalanx, ſounding pæans high;
As if the preſent deity of fame
Had from the ſummit ſhown her dazzling form,
With wreaths unfading on her temples bound,
Her adamantine trumpet in her hand,
To celebrate their valour. From the van
Leonidas advances like the ſun,
When through dividing clouds his preſence ſtays
Their ſweeping rack, and ſtills the clam'rous wind.
The army ſilent halt. Their enſigns fan
The air no longer. Motionleſs their ſpears.
His eye reveals the ardour of his ſoul,
Which thus finds utt'rance from his eager lips.
All hail! Thermopylæ, and you, the pow'rs
Preſiding here. All hail! ye ſylvan gods,
Ye fountain nymphs, who ſend your lucid rills
In broken murmurs down the rugged ſteep.
Receive us, O benignant, and ſupport
The cauſe of Greece. Conceal the ſecret paths,
Which o'er theſe crags, and through their foreſts wind,
Untrod by human feet, and trac'd alone
By your immortal footſteps. O defend
Your own receſſes, nor let impious war
Profane the ſolemn ſilence of your groves.
Then on your hills your praiſes ſhall you hear

From thoſe, whoſe deeds ſhall tell th' approving world,
That not to undeſervers did ye grant
Your high protection. You, my valiant friends,
Now rouſe the gen'rous ſpirit, which inflames
Your hearts; exert the vigour of your arms:
That in the boſoms of the brave and free
Your memorable actions may ſurvive;
May ſound delightful in the ear of Time,
Long as blue Neptune beats the Malian ſtrand,
Or thoſe tall cliffs erect their ſhaggy tops
So near to heav'n, your monuments of fame.
As in ſome torrid region, where the head
Of Ceres bends beneath her golden load;
If from a burning brand a ſcatter'd ſpark
Invade the parching ground; a ſudden blaze
Sweeps o'er the crackling champain: through his hoſt
Not with leſs ſwiftneſs to the furtheſt ranks
The words of great Leonidas diffus'd
A more than mortal fervour. Ev'ry heart
Diſtends with thoughts of glory, ſuch as raiſe
The patriot's virtue, and the ſoldier's fire;
When Danger, moſt tremendous in his form,
Seems in their ſight moſt lovely. On their minds
Imagination pictures all the ſcenes
Of war, the purple field, the heaps of dead,
The glitt'ring trophy, pil'd with Perſian arms.
But lo! the Grecian leaders, who before
Were ſtation'd near Thermopylæ, ſalute
Laconia's king. The Theſpian chief, ally'd
To Dithyrambus, firſt the ſilence breaks,
An ancient warrior. From behind his caſque,
Whoſe creſted weight his aged temples bore,
The ſlender hairs, all ſilver'd o'er by time,
Flow'd venerable down. He thus began:
Joy now ſhall crown the period of my days;
And whether nigh my father's urn I ſleep;
Or, ſlain by Perſia's ſword, embrace the earth,
Our common parent; be it as the gods
Shall beſt determine. For the preſent hour

I bleſs their bounty, which hath giv'n my age
To ſee the brave Leonidas, and bid
That hero welcome on this glorious ſhore,
To fix the baſis of the Grecian weal.
Here too the crafty Anaxander ſpake.
Of all the Thebans, we, rejoicing, hail
The king of Sparta. We obey'd his call.
O may oblivion o'er the ſhame of Thebes
A dark'ning veil extend! or thoſe alone
By Fame be curs'd, whoſe impious councils turn
Their countrymen from virtue! Thebes was ſunk,
Her glory bury'd in diſhoneſt ſloth.
To wake her languor gen'rous Alphæus came,
The meſſenger of freedom. O accept
Our grateful hearts; thou, Alpheus, art the cauſe
That Anaxander from his native gates
Not ſingle joins this hoſt, nor tamely theſe,
My choſen friends behind their walls remain.
Enough of words. Time preſſes. Mount, ye chiefs,
This loftieſt part of Oeta. This o'erlooks
The ſtreights, and far beyond their northern mouth
Extends our ſight acroſs the Malian plain.
Behold a native, Epialtes call'd,
Who with the foe from Thracia's bounds hath march'd.
Diſguis'd in ſeeming worth, he ended here.
The camp not long had Epialtes reach'd,
By race a Malian. Eloquent his tongue,
His heart was falſe and abject. He was ſkill'd
To grace perfidious councils, and to clothe
In ſwelling phraſe the baſeneſs of his ſoul,
Foul nurſe of treaſons. To the tents of Greece,
Himſelf a Greek, a faithleſs ſpy he came.
Soon to the friends of Xerxes he repair'd,
The Theban chiefs, and nightly councils held
How to betray the Spartans, or deject
By conſternation. Up the arduous ſlope
With him each leader to the ſummit climbs.
Thence a tremendous proſpect they command,

Where endleſs plains, by white pavilions hid,
Spread like the vaſt Atlantic, when no ſhore,
No rock, no promontory ſtops the ſight
Unbounded, as it wanders; while the moon,
Reſplendent eye of night, in fulleſt orb
Surveys th' interminate expanſe, and throws
Her rays abroad to deck in ſnowy light
The dancing billows. Such was Xerxes' camp;
A pow'r unrivall'd by the mightieſt king,
Or fierceſt conqu'ror, whoſe blood-thirſty pride,
Diſſolving all the ſacred ties which bind
The happineſs of nations, hath upcall'd
The ſleeping fury, Diſcord, from her den.
Not from the hundred brazen gates of Thebes,
The tow'rs of Memphis, and thoſe pregnant fields,
Enrich'd by kindly Nile, ſuch armies ſwarm'd
Around Seſoſtris; who with trophies fill'd
The vanquiſh'd eaſt, who o'er the rapid foam
Of diſtant Tanais, o'er the ſurface broad
Of Ganges, ſent his formidable name.
Nor yet in Aſia's far extended bounds
E'er met ſuch numbers, not when Ninus led
Th' Aſſyrian race to conqueſt. Not the gates
Of Babylon along Euphrates pour'd
Such myriads arm'd; when, emptying all her ſtreets,
The rage of dire Semiramis they bore
Beyond the Indus; there defeated, left
His blood ſtain'd current turbid with their dead.
Yet of the chiefs, contemplating this ſcene,
Not one is ſhaken. Undiſmay'd they ſtand;
Th' immeaſurable camp with fearleſs eyes
They traverſe: while in meditation near
The treach'rous Malian waits, collecting all
His pomp of words to paint the hoſtile pow'r;
Nor yet with falſehoods arms his fraudful tongue
To feign a tale of terror. Truth herſelf
Beyond the reach of fiction to enhance
New aids his treaſon, and with cold diſmay
Might pierce the boldeſt heart, unleſs ſecur'd

By dauntleſs virture, which diſdains to live,
From liberty divorc'd. Requeſted ſoon,
He breaks his artful ſilence. Greeks and friends,
Can I behold my native Malian fields,
Preſenting hoſtile millions to your ſight,
And not in grief ſuppreſs the horrid tale,
Which you exact from theſe ill-omen'd lips.
On Tracia's ſea-beat verge I watch'd the foes;
Where, joining Europe to the Aſian ſtrand,
A mighty bridge reſtrain'd th' outrageous waves,
And ſtemm'd the impetuous current: while in arms
The univerſal progeny of men
Seem'd trampling o'er the ſubjugated flood
By thouſands, by ten thouſands. Perſians, Medes,
Aſſyrians, Saces, Indians, ſwarthy files
From Ethiopia, Egypt's tawny ſons,
Arabians, Bactrians, Parthians, all the ſtrength
Of Aſia, and of Libya. Neptune groan'd
Beneath their number, and indignant heav'd
His neck againſt th' incumbent weight. In vain
The violence of Eurus and the north,
With rage combin'd, againſt th' unyielding pile
Daſh'd half the Helleſpont. The eaſtern world
Seven days and nights uninterrupted paſs
To cover Thracia's regions. They accept
A Perſian lord. They range their hardy race
Beneath his ſtandards. Macedonia's youth,
The brave Theſſalian horſe with ev'ry Greek,
Who dwells beyond Thermopylæ, attend,
Aſſiſt a foreign tyrant. Sire of gods,
Who in a moment by thy will ſupreme
Canſt quell the mighty in their proudeſt hopes,
Canſt raiſe the weak to ſafety, Oh! impart
Thy inſtant ſuccour! Interpoſe thy arm!
With lightning blaſt their ſtandards! Oh! confound
With triple-bolted thunder Aſia's tents,
Whence ruſhing millions by the morn will pour
An inundation to o'erwhelm the Greeks.
Reſiſtance elſe were vain againſt a hoſt,

Which overſpreads Theſſalia. Far beyond
That Malian champain, ſtretching wide below,
Beyond the utmoſt meaſure of the ſight
From this aſpiring cliff, the hoſtile camp
Contains yet mightier numbers; who have drain'd
The beds of copious rivers with their thirſt,
Who with their arrows hide the mid-day ſun.
Then we ſhall give them battle in the ſhade,
Dieneces reply'd. Not calmly thus
Diomedon. On Perſia's camp he bent
His low'ring brow, which frowns had furrow'd o'er,
Then fierce exclaim'd. Bellona, turn and view
With joyful eyes that field, the fatal ſtage,
By regal madneſs for thy rage prepar'd
To exerciſe its horrors. Whet thy teeth,
Voracious Death. All Aſia is thy prey,
Contagion, famine, and the Grecian ſword,
For thy inſatiate hunger will provide
Variety of carnage. He concludes;
While on the hoſt immenſe his cloudy brow
Is fix'd diſdainful, and their ſtrength defies.
Meantime an eaſtern herald down the paſs
Was ſeen, ſlow moving towards the Phocian wall
From Aſia's monarch delegated, came
Tigranes and Phraortes. From the hill
Leonidas conducts th' impatient chiefs.
By them environ'd, in his tent he ſits;
Where thus Tigranes their attention calls.
Ambaſſadors from Perſia's king we ſtand
Before you, Grecians. To diſplay the pow'r
Of our great maſter, were a needleſs taſk.
The name of Xerxes, Aſia's mighty lord,
Invincible, exalted on a throne,
Surpaſſing human luſtre, muſt have reach'd
To ev'ry clime, and ev'ry heart impreſs'd
With awe, and low ſubmiſſion. Yet I ſwear
By yon refulgent orb, which flames above,
The glorious ſymbol of eternal pow'r,
This military throng, this ſhow of war

Well nigh perſuade me, you have never heard
That name, at whoſe commanding ſound the banks
Of Indus tremble, and the Caſpian wave,
Th' Egyptian flood, the Helleſpontic ſurge
Obedient roll. O impotent and raſh;
Whom yet the large beneficence of heav'n,
And heav'nly Xerxes, merciful and kind,
Deign to preſerve. Reſign your arms. Diſperſe
All to your cities. There let humbleſt hands
With earth and water greet your deſtin'd lord.
As through th' extenſive grove, whoſe leafy boughs
Entwining, crown ſome eminence with ſhade,
The tempeſts ruſh ſonorous, and between
The craſhing branches roar; by fierce diſdain,
By indignation, thus the Grecians rous'd,
In loudeſt clamour cloſe the Perſian's ſpeech:
But ev'ry tongue was huſh'd, when Sparta's king
This brief reply deliver'd from his ſeat.
O Perſian! when to Xerxes thou return'ſt,
Say, thou haſt told the wonders of his pow'r,
Then ſay, thou ſaw'ſt a ſlender band of Greece,
Which dares his boaſted millions to the field.
He adds no more. Th' ambaſſadors retire.
Them o'er the limits of the Grecian lines
Diomedon and Theſpia's youth conduct.
In ſlow ſolemnity they all proceed,
And ſullen ſilence; but their looks denote
Far more than ſpeech could utter. Wrath contracts
The forehead of Diomedon. His teeth
Gnaſh with impatience of delay'd revenge.
Diſdain, which ſprung from conſcious merit, fluſh'd
The cheek of Dithyrambus. On the face
Of either Perſian arrogance, incens'd
By diſappointment, lour'd. The utmoſt ſtreight
They now attain'd, which open'd to the tents
Of Aſia, there diſcov'ring wide to view
Her deep, immenſe arrangement. Then the heart
Of vain Tigranes, ſwelling at the ſight,
Thus overflows in loud and haughty phraſe.

O Arimanius! origin of ill,
Have we demanded of thy ruthleſs pow'r
Thus with the curſe of madneſs to afflict
Theſe wretched men? But ſince thy dreadful ire
To irreſiſtible perdition dooms
The Grecian race, we vainly ſhould oppoſe.
Be thy dire will accompliſh'd. Let them fall,
Their native ſoil be fatten'd with their blood.
Enrag'd, the ſtern Diomedon replies.
Thou baſe dependant on a lawleſs king,
Thou purple ſlave, thou boaſter, doſt thou know
That I beheld the Marathonian field?
Where, like the Lybian ſands before the wind,
Your hoſt was ſcatter'd by Athenian ſpears;
Where thou, perhaps, by ignominious flight
Didſt from this arm protect thy ſhiv'ring limbs.
O let me find thee in to-morrow's fight!
Along this rocky pavement ſhalt thou lie,
To dogs a banquet. With uplifted palms
Tigranes then. Omnipotent ſupport
Of ſcepter'd Xerxes, Horomazes, hear!
To thee his firſt victorious fruits of war
Thy worſhipper devotes, the gory ſpoils,
Which from this Grecian, by the riſing dawn,
In ſight of either hoſt my ſtrength ſhall rend.
At length Phraortes, interpoſing, ſpake.
I too would find among the Grecian chiefs
One, who in battle dares abide my lance.
The gallant youth of Theſpia ſwift reply'd.
Thou look'ſt on me, O Perſian. Worthier far
Thou might have ſingled from the ranks of Greece,
Not one more willing to eſſay thy force.
Yes, I will prove before the eye of Mars,
How far the proweſs of her meaneſt chief
Beyond thy vaunts deſerves the palm of fame.
This ſaid, the Perſians to their king repair,
Back to their camp the Grecians. There they find
Each ſoldier, poiſing his extended ſpear,
His weighty buckler bracing on his arm

In warlike preparation. Through the files
Each leader, moving vigilant, by praiſe,
By exhortation aids their native warmth.
Alone the Theban Anaxander pin'd,
Who thus apart his Malian friend beſpake.
What has thy lofty eloquence avail'd,
Alas! in vain attempting to confound
The Spartan valour? With redoubled fires,
See, how their boſoms glow. They wiſh to die;
They wait impatient for th' unequal fight.
Too ſoon th' inſuperable foes will ſpread
Promiſcuous havoc round, and Thebans ſhare
The doom of Spartans. Through the guarded paſs
Who will adventure Aſia's camp to reach
In our behalf? That Xerxes may be warn'd
To ſpare his friends amid the gen'ral wreck;
When his high-ſwoln reſentment, like a flood,
Increas'd by ſtormy ſhow'rs, ſhall cover Greece
With deſolation. Epialtes here.
Whence, Anaxander, this unjuſt deſpair?
Is there a path on Oeta's hills unknown
To Epialtes? Over trackleſs rocks
Through mazy woods my ſecret ſteps can paſs.
Farewel. I go. Thy merit ſhall be told
To Perſia's king. Thou only watch the hour;
When wanted moſt, thy ready ſuccour lend.
Meantime a wary, comprehenſive care
To ev'ry part Leonidas extends;
As in the human frame through ev'ry vein,
And artery minute, the ruling heart
Its vital pow'rs diſperſes. In his tent
The prudent chief of Locris he conſults;
He ſummons Melibœus by the voice
Of Agis. In humility not mean,
By no unſeemly ignorance depreſs'd,
Th' ingenuous ſwain, by all th' illuſtrious houſe
Of Ajax honour'd, bows before the king,
Who gracious ſpake. The confidence beſtow'd,
The praiſe by ſage Oileus might ſuffice

To verify thy worth. Myſelf have watch'd,
Have found thee ſkilful, active, and diſcreet.
Thou know'ſt the region round. With Agis go,
The upper ſtreights, the Phocian camp explore.
O condeſcenſion! Melibœus then,
More ornamental to the great, than gems,
A purple robe, or diadem. The king
Accepts my ſervice. Pleaſing is my taſk.
Spare not thy ſervant. Exerciſe my zeal.
Oïleus will rejoice, and ſmiling, ſay,
An humble hand may ſmooth a hero's path.
He leads the way, while Agis following, ſpake.
O ſwain! diſtinguiſh'd by a lib'ral mind,
Who were thy parents? Where thy place of birth?
What chance depriv'd thee of a father's houſe?
Oïleus ſure thy liberty would grant,
Or Sparta's king ſolicit for that grace;
When in a ſtation equal to thy worth
Thou may'ſt be rank'd. The prudent hind began.
In diff'rent ſtations diff'rent virtues dwell,
All reaping diff'rent benefits. The great
In dignity and honours meet reward
For acts of bounty, and heroic toils.
A ſervant's merit is obedience, truth,
Fidelity; his recompenſe content.
Be not offended at my words, O chief!
They, who are free, with envy may behold
This bondman of Oïleus. To his truſt,
His love exalted, I by nature's pow'r
From his pure model could not fail to mould
What—thou entitleſt lib'ral. Whence I came,
Or who my parents, is to me unknown.
In childhood ſeiz'd by robbers, I was ſold.
They took their price. They huſh'd th' atrocious deed.
Dear to Oïleus and his race I throve;
And whether noble, or ignoble born,
I am contented, ſtudious of their love
Alone. Ye ſons of Sparta, I admire
Your acts, your ſpirit, but confine my own

To their condition, happy in my lord,
Himſelf of men moſt happy. Agis bland
Rejoins. O! born with talents to become
A lot more noble, which, by thee refus'd,
Thou doſt the more deſerve. Laconia's king
Diſcerns thy merit through its modeſt veil.
Conſummate prudence in thy words I hear.
Long may contentment, juſtly priz'd, be thine.
But ſhould the ſtate demand thee, I foreſee,
Thou wouldſt like others in the field excel,
Wouldſt ſhare in glory. Blithe return'd the ſwain.
Not ev'ry ſervice is confin'd to arms.
Thou ſhalt behold me in my preſent ſtate
Not uſeleſs. If the charge Oïleus gave
I can accompliſh, meriting his praiſe,
And thy eſteem, my glory will be full.
Both pleas'd in converſe, thus purſue their way,
Where Oeta lifts her ſummits huge to heav'n
In rocks abrupt, pyramidal, or tower'd
Like caſtles. Sudden from a tufted crag,
Where goats are browſing, Melibœus hears
A call of welcome. There his courſe he ſtays.

BOOK IV.

The Argument.

TIGRANES and Phraortes repair to Xerxes, whom they find seated on a throne, surrounded by his Satraps in a magnificent pavilion; while the Magi stand before him, and sing a hymn, containing the religion of Zoroastres. Xerxes, notwithstanding the arguments of his brothers, Hyperanthes and Abrocomes, gives no credit to the ambassadors, who report, that the Grecians are determined to maintain the pass against him; but by the advice of Artemisia, the queen of Caria, ascends his chariot to take a view of the Grecians himself, and commands Demaratus, an exiled king of Sparta, to attend him. He passes through the midst of his army, consisting of many nations, differing in arms, customs, and manners. He advances to the entrance of the streights, and, surprised at the behaviour of the Spartans, demands the reason of it from Demaratus; which occasions a conversation between them on the mercenary forces of Persia, and the militia of Greece. Demaratus, weeping at the sight of his countrymen, is comforted by Hyperanthes. Xerxes, still incredulous, commands Tigranes and Phraortes to bring the Grecians bound before him the next day, and retires to his pavilion. Artemisia remains behind with her son, and communicates to Hyperanthes her apprehensions of a defeat at Thermopylæ. She takes an accurate view of the pass, chooses a convenient place for an ambuscade, and her departure to the Persian camp is surprised by a reproof from a woman of an awful appearance on a cliff of mount Oeta.

THE plain beyond Thermopylæ is girt
Half round by mountains, half by Neptune lav'd,
The arduous ridge is broken deep in clefts,
Which open channels to pellucid streams
In rapid flow sonorous. Chief in fame
Spercheos, boasting once his poplars tall,
Foams down a stony bed. Throughout the face
Of this broad champain numberless are pitch'd
Barbarian tents. Along the winding flood
To rich Thessalia's confines they extend.
They fill the vallies, late profusely bless'd
In Nature's vary'd beauties. Hostile spears
Now bristle horrid through her languid shrubs.
Pale die her flowrets under barb'rous feet.
Embracing ivy from its rock is torn.
The lawn, dismantled of its verdure, fades.
The poplar groves, uprooted from the banks,
Leave desolate the stream. Elab'rate domes,
To heav'n devoted in recesses green,
Had felt rude force, insensible and blind
To elegance and art. The statues, busts,
The figur'd vases, mutilated lie
With chisell'd columns, their engraven freeze,

Their architrave and cornice, all disjoin'd.
Yet unpolluted is a part reserv'd
In this deep vale, a patrimonial spot
Of Aleuadian princes, who, allies
To Xerxes, reign'd in Thessaly. There glow
Inviolate the shrubs. There branch the trees,
Sons of the forest. Over downy moss
Smooth walks and fragrant, lucid here and broad,
There clos'd in myrtle under woodbine roofs,
Wind to retreats delectable, to grots,
To sylvan structures, bow'rs, and cooling dells,
Enliven'd all and musical with birds
Of vocal sweetness, in relucent plumes
Innumerably various. Lulling falls
Of liquid crystal from perennial founts
Attune their pebbled channels. Here the queen,
The noble dames of Persia, here the train
Of royal infants, each with eunuch guards,
In rich pavilions, dazzling to the sight,
Possess'd, remote from onset and surprise,
A tranquil station. Ariana here,
Ill-destin'd princess, from Darius sprung,
Hangs, undelighted, o'er melodious rills
Her drooping forehead. Love-afflicted fair!
All inharmonious are the feather'd choirs
To her sad ear. From flow'rs, and florid plants
To her the breezes, wafting fresh perfumes,
Transmit no pleasure. Sedulous in vain,
Her tender slaves in harmony, with lutes
Of soothing sound, their warbled voices blend
To charm her sadness. This, the precious part
Of Asia's camp, Artuchus holds in charge,
A satrap, long experienc'd, who presides
O'er all the regal palaces. High rank'd,
Bold, resolute and faithful, he commands
The whole Sperchean vale. In prospect rise
The distant navy, dancing on the foam,
Th' unbounded camp, enveloping the plain,
With Xerxes' tent, august in structure plac'd

A central object to attract the eyes
Of subject millions. Thither now resort
Tigranes and Phraortes. Him they find
Enclos'd by princes, by illustrious chiefs,
The potentates of Asia. Near his side
Abrocomes and Hyperanthes wait,
His gallant brothers, with Mazæus brave,
Pandates, Itaphernes, mighty lords.
Their sceptre'd master from his radiant seat
Looks down imperious. So the stately tow'r
Of Belus, mingling its majestic brow
With heav'n's bright azure, from on high survey'd
The huge extent of Babylon, with all
Her sumptuous domes and palaces beneath.
This day his banners to unfurl in Greece
The monarch's will decides: but first ordains,
That grateful hymns should celebrate the name
Of Horomazes: So the Persians call'd
The world's great author. Rob'd in purest white,
The Magi rang'd before th' unfolded tent.
Fire blaz'd beside them. Tow'rds the secret flame
They turn'd, and sent their tuneful praise to heav'n.
From Zoroastres was the song deriv'd,
Who on the hills of Persia, from his cave,
By flow'rs environ'd, and melodious founts,
Which sooth the solemn mansion, had reveal'd,
How Horomazes, radiant source of good,
Original, immortal, fram'd the globe,
In fruitfulness and beauty: how with stars
By him the heavens were spangled: how the sun,
Refulgent Mithra, purest spring of light,
And genial warmth, whence teeming nature smiles,
Burst from the east at his creating voice;
When straight beyond the golden verge of day
Night show'd the horrors of her distant reign,
Where black and hateful Arimanius frown'd,
The author foul of evil: how with shades
From his dire mansion, he deform'd the work

Of Horomazes, turn'd to noxious heat
The ſolar beam, that foodful earth might parch,
That ſtreams exhaling might forſake their beds,
Whence peſtilence and famine: how the pow'r
Of Horomazes in the human breaſt
Benevolence and equity infus'd,
Truth, temperance, and wiſdom, ſprung from heav'n:
When Arimanius blacken'd all the ſoul
With falſehood and injuſtice, with deſires
Inſatiable, with violence and rage,
Malignity and folly. If the hand
Of Horomazes on precarious life
Sheds wealth and pleaſure; ſwift th' infernal god
With wild exceſs, or av'rice, blaſts the joy.
Thou Horomazes, victory doſt give.
By thee with fame the regal head is crown'd.
Great Xerxes owns thy ſuccour. When in ſtorms
The hate of direful Arimanius ſwell'd
The Helleſpont, thou o'er its chaſing breaſt
The deſtin'd maſter of the world didſt lead,
This day his promis'd glories to enjoy:
When Greece affrighted to his arm ſhall bend;
Ev'n as at laſt ſhall Arimanius fall
Before thy might, and evil be no more.
The Magi ceas'd their harmony. Behold,
From her tall ſhip, between a double row
Of naval warriors, while a golden ray
Shoots from her ſtandard, Artemiſia lands.
In her enrich'd accoutrements of war,
The full-wrought buckler, and high-creſted helm,
In Caria firſt devis'd, acroſs the beach
Her tow'ring form advances. So the pine,
From Taurus hewn mature in ſpiry pride,
Now by the ſailor in its canvaſs wings
Voluminous, and dazzling pendants dreſs'd,
On Artemiſia's own imperial deck
Is ſeen to riſe, and overtop the grove
Of crowded maſts ſurrounding. In her heart
Deep ſcorn of courtly counſellors ſhe bore,

Who fill with impious vanity their king;
As when he laſh'd the Helleſpont with rods,
Amid the billows caſt a golden chain
To fetter Neptune. Yet her brow ſevere
Unbent its rigour often, as ſhe glanc'd
On her young ſon, who, pacing near in arms
Of Carian guiſe, proportion'd to his years,
Look'd up, and waken'd by repeated ſmiles
Maternal fondneſs, melting in that eye,
Which ſcowl'd on purpled flatterers. Her ſeat
At the right hand of Xerxes ſhe aſſumes,
Invited; while in adoration bow'd
Tigranes and Phraortes. Prone they lay,
Acroſs their foreheads ſpread their ſervile palms,
As from a preſent deity, too bright
For mortal viſion, to conceal their eyes.
At length in abject phraſe Tigranes thus.
O Xerxes, live for ever! Gracious lord,
Who doſt permit thy ſervants to approach
Thy awful ſight, and proſtrate to confeſs
Thy majeſty and radiance. May the pow'r
Of Horomazes ſtretch thy regal arm
O'er endleſs nations, from the Indian ſhores
To thoſe wide floods, which beat Iberian ſtrands,
From northen Tanais to the ſource of Nile!
Still from thy head may Arimanius bend
Againſt thy foes his malice! Yonder Greeks,
Already ſmit with frenzy by his wrath,
Reject thy proffer'd clemency. They chooſe
To magnify thy glory by their fall.
The monarch, turning to his brothers, ſpake.
Say, Hyperanthes, can thy ſoul believe
Theſe tidings? Sure theſe ſlaves have never dar'd
To face the Grecians, but delude our ears
With baſe impoſtures, which their fear ſuggeſts.
He frown'd, and Hyperanthes calm reply'd.
O from his ſervants may the king avert
His indignation! Greece was fam'd of old
For martial ſpirit, and a dauntleſs breed.

I once have try'd their valour. To my words
Abrocomes can witneſs. When thy ſire
And ours, Darius, to Athenian ſhores
With Artaphernes brave, and Datis, ſent
Our tender youth; at Marathon we found
How weak the hope that numbers could diſmay
A foe, reſolved on victory, or death.
Yet not, as one contemptible, or baſe,
Let me appear before thee. Though the Greeks
With ſuch perſiſting courage be endu'd,
Soon as the king ſhall ſummon to the field,
He ſhall behold me in the dang'rous van
Exalt my ſpear, and pierce the hoſtile ranks,
Or ſink beneath them. Xerxes ſwift rejoin'd.
  Why over Aſia, and the Libyan ſoil,
With all their nations, doth my potent arm
Extend its ſceptre? Wherefore do I ſweep
Acroſs the earth with millions in my train?
Why ſhade the ocean with unnumber'd ſails?
Why all this pow'r, unleſs th' Almighty's will
Decreed one maſter to the ſubject world;
And that the earth's extremity alone
Should bound my empire? He for this reduc'd
The Nile's revolted ſons, enlarg'd my ſway
With ſandy Libya, and the ſultry clime
Of Æthiopia. He for this ſubdu'd
The Helleſpontic foam, and taught the ſea
Obedience to my nod. Then dream no more,
That heav'n, deſerting my imperial cauſe,
With courage more than human, will inſpire
Yon deſpicable Grecians, and expunge
The common fears of nature from their breaſts.
  The monarch ceas'd. Abrocomes began.
The king commands us to reveal our thoughts.
Incredulous he hears. But time and truth
Not Horomazes can arreſt. Thy beams
To inſtant lightning, Mithra, may'ſt thou change
For my deſtruction; may th' offended king
Frown on his ſervant, caſt a lothing eye;

If the assertion of my lips be false:
Our further march those Grecians will oppose.
Amid th' encircling peers Argestes sat,
A potent prince. O'er Sipylus he reign'd,
Whose verdant summits overlook'd the waves
Of Hermus and Pactolus. Either stream,
Enrich'd by golden sands, a tribute pay'd
To this great satrap. Through the servile court
Yet none was found more practic'd in the arts
Of mean submission; none more skill'd to gain
The royal favour; none, who better knew
The phrase, the look, the gesture of a slave;
None more detesting Artemisia's worth,
By her none more despis'd. His master's eye
He caught, then spake. Display thy dazzling state,
Thou deity of Asia. Greece will hide
Before thy presence her dejected face.
Last Artemisia, rising stern, began:
Why sits the lord of Asia in his tent,
Unprofitably wasting precious hours
In vain discussion, whether yonder Greeks,
Rang'd in defence of that important pass,
Will fight, or fly? A question by the sword
To be decided. Still to narrow streights
By land, by sea, thy council hath confin'd
Each enterprise of war. In numbers weak
Twice have th' Athenians in Eubœa's frith
Repuls'd thy navy—But whate'er thy will,
Be it enforc'd by vigour. Let the king
The diff'rence see by trial in the field
Between smooth sound and valour. Then dissolve
These impotent debates. Ascend thy car.
The future stage of war thyself explore.
Behind thee leave the vanity of hope,
That such a foe to splendour will submit,
Whom steel, not gold, must vanquish. Thou provide
Thy male, Argestes. Not in silken robes,
Not as in council with an oily tongue,

But ſpear to ſpear, and clanging ſhield to ſhield,
Thou ſoon muſt grapple on a field of blood.
The king aroſe—No more. Prepare my car.
The Spartan exile, Demaratus, call.
We will ourſelves advance to view the foe.
The monarch will'd; and ſuddenly he heard
His trampling horſes. High on ſilver wheels
The iv'ry car with azure ſapphires ſhone.
Cærulean beryls, and the jaſper green,
The emerald, the ruby's glowing bluſh,
The flaming topaz with its golden beam,
The pearl, th' empurpled amethyſt, and all
The various gems, which India's mines afford
To deck the pomp of kings. In burniſh'd gold
A ſculptur'd eagle from behind diſplay'd
His ſtately neck, and o'er the royal head
Outſtretch'd his dazzling wings. Eight gen'rous ſteeds,
Which on the fam'd Niſæan plain were nurs'd
In wint'ry Media, drew the radiant car.
Not thoſe of old, to Hercules refus'd
By falſe Laomedon, nor they, which bore
The ſon of Thetis through the ſcatter'd rear
Of Troy's devoted race, with theſe might vie
In ſtrength, or beauty. In obedient pride
They hear their lord. Exulting, in the air
They toſs their foreheads. On their gliſt'ning cheſts
The ſilver manes diſport. The king aſcends.
Beſide his footſtool Demaratus ſits.
Th' charioteer now ſhakes th' effulgent reins,
Strong Patiramphes. At the ſignal bound
Th' attentive ſteeds; the chariot flies: behind
Ten thouſand horſe in thunder ſweep the field.
Down to the ſea-beat margin, on a plain
Of vaſt expanſion in battalia wait
The eaſtern bands. To theſe th' imperial wheels,
By princes follow'd in a hundred cars,
Proceed. The queen of Caria and her ſon
With Hyperanthes rode. The king's approach

Swift through the wide arrangement is proclaim'd.
He now draws nigh. Th' innumerable hoſt
Roll back by nations, and admit their lord
With all his ſatraps. As from cryſtal domes,
Built underneath an arch of pendent ſeas,
When that ſtern pow'r, whoſe trident rules the floods,
With each cerulean deity aſcends,
Thron'd in his pearly chariot, all the deep
Divides its boſom to th' emerging god;
So Xerxes rode between the Aſian world,
On either ſide receding: when, as down
Th' immeaſurable ranks his ſight was loſt,
A momentary gloom o'ercaſt his mind,
While this reflection fill'd his eyes with tears:
That, ſoon as Time a hundred years had told,
Not one among thoſe millions ſhould ſurvive.
Whence to obſcure thy pride aroſe that cloud?
Was it, that once humanity could touch
A tyrant's breaſt? or rather did thy ſoul
Repine, O Xerxes, at the bitter thought,
That all thy pow'r was mortal? but the veil
Of ſadneſs ſoon forſook his brightning eye,
As with adoring awe thoſe millions bow'd,
And to his heart relentleſs pride recall'd.
Elate the mingled proſpect he ſurveys
Of glitt'ring files unnumber'd, chariots ſcyth'd,
On thundring axles roll'd, and haughty ſteeds,
In ſumptuous trappings clad, Barbaric pomp.
While gorgeous banners to the ſun expand
Their ſtreaming volumes of relucent gold,
Pre-eminent amidſt tiaras gemm'd,
Engraven helmets, ſhields emboſs'd, and ſpears
In number equal to the bladed graſs,
Whoſe living green in vernal beauty clothes
Theſſalia's vale. What pow'rs of ſounding verſe
Can to the mind preſent th' amazing ſcene?
Not thee, whom Rumour's fabling voice delights,
Poetic Fancy, to my aid I call;
But thou, hiſtoric Truth, ſupport my ſong,

Which ſhall the various multitude diſplay,
Their arms, their manners, and their native ſeats.
The Perſians firſt in ſcaly corſelets ſhone,
A gen'rous nation, worthy to enjoy
The liberty their injur'd fathers loſt,
Whoſe arms for Cyrus overturn'd the ſtrength
Of Babylon and Sardis. Pow'r advanc'd
The victor's head above his country's laws.
Their tongues were practis'd in the words of truth,
Their limbs inur'd to ev'ry manly toil,
To brace the bow, to rule th' impetuous ſteed,
To dart the javelin; but untaught to form
The ranks of war, with unconnected force,
With ineffectual fortitude they ruſh'd,
As on a fence of adamant, to pierce
Th' indiſſoluble phalanx. Lances ſhort,
And oſier-woven targets they oppos'd
To weighty Grecian ſpears, and maſſy ſhields.
On ev'ry head tiaras roſe like tow'rs,
Impenetrable. With a golden gloſs
Blaz'd their gay ſandals, and the floating reins
Of each proud courſer. Daggers on their thighs,
Well furniſh'd quivers on their ſhoulders hung,
And ſtrongeſt bows of mighty ſize they bore.
Reſembling theſe in arms, the Medes are ſeen,
The Ciſſians and Hyrcanians. Media once
From her bleak mountains aw'd the ſubject eaſt.
Her kings in cold Ecbatana were thron'd.
The Ciſſians march'd from Suſa's regal walls,
From ſultry fields, o'erſpread with branching palms,
And white with lilies, water'd by the floods
Of fam'd Choaſpes. His tranſparent wave
The coſtly goblet wafts to Perſia's kings.
All other ſtreams the royal lip diſdains.
Hyrcania's race forſook their fruitful clime,
Dark in the ſhadows of expanding oaks,
To Ceres dear and Bacchus. There the corn,
Bent by its foodful burden ſheds, unreap'd,
Its plenteous ſeed, impregnating the ſoil

With future harvests; while in ev'ry wood
Their precious labours on the loaden boughs
The honey'd swarms pursue. Assyria's sons
Display their brazen casques, unskilful work
Of rude Barbarians. Each sustains a mace,
O'erlaid with iron. Near Euphrates' banks
Within the mighty Babylonian gates
They dwell, and where, still mightier once in sway,
Old Ninus rear'd its head, th' imperial seat
Of eldest tyrants. These Chaldæa joins,
The land of shepherds. From the pastures wide
There Belus first discern'd the various course
Of Heav'n's bright planets, and the clust'ring stars
With names distinguish'd, whence himself was deem'd
The first of gods. His sky-ascending fane
In Babylon the proud Assyrians rais'd
Drawn from the bounteous soil, by Ochus lav'd,
The Bactrians stood, and rough in skins of goats
The Paricanian archers. Caspian ranks
From barren mountains, from the joyless coast
Around the stormy lake, whose name they bore,
Their scymetars upheld, and cany bows.
The Indian tribes, a threefold host compose.
Part guide the courser, part the rapid car;
The rest on foot within the bending cane
For slaughter fix the iron-pointed reed.
They o'er the Indus from the distant verge
Of Ganges passing, left a region, lov'd
By lavish Nature. There the season bland
Bestows a double harvest. Honey'd shrubs,
The cinnamon, the spikenard bless their fields.
Array'd in native wealth, each warrior shines;
His ears bright beaming pendants grace; his hands,
Encircled, wear a bracelet, starr'd with gems.
Such were the nations, who to Xerxes sent
Their mingled aids of infantry and horse.
Now, Muse, recite what multitudes obscur'd
The plain on foot, or elevated high
On martial axles, or on camels beat

The looſen'd mold. The Parthian's firſt appear,
Then weak in numbers, from unfruitful hills,
From woods, nor yet for warlike ſteeds renown'd.
Near them the Sogdians, Dadices arrange,
Gandarians, and Choraſmians. Sacian throngs
From cold Imaus pour'd, from Oxus' wave,
From Cyra, built on Iaxartes' brink,
A bound of Perſia's empire. Wild, untam'd,
To fury prone, their deſarts they forſook.
A bow, a faulchion, and a pond'rous axe,
The ſavage legions arm'd. A pointed caſque
O'er each grim viſage rear'd an iron cone,
In arms like Perſians the Saranges ſtood.
High as their knees the ſhapely buſkins clung
Around their legs. Magnificent they trod
In garments richly tinctur'd. Next are ſeen
The Pactian, Mycian, and the Utian train,
In ſkins of goats rude-veſted. But in ſpoils
Of tawny lions, and of ſpotted pards,
The graceful range of Ethiopians ſhows
An equal ſtature, and a beauteous frame.
Their torrid region had imbrown'd their cheeks,
And curl'd their jetty locks. In ancient ſong
Renown'd for juſtice, riches they diſdain'd,
As foes to virtue. From their ſeat remote,
On Nilus' verge above th' Egyptian bound,
Forc'd by their king's malignity and pride,
Theſe friends of hoſpitality and peace,
Themſelves uninjur'd wage reluctant war
Againſt a land, whoſe climate, and whoſe name,
To them were ſtrange. With hardeſt ſtone they point
The rapid arrow. Bows four cubits long,
Form'd of elaſtic branches from the palm,
They carry, knotted clubs, and lances, arm'd
With horns of goats. The Paphlagonians march'd,
From where Carambis, with projected brows,
O'erlooks the duſky Euxine, wrapt in miſts,
From where, through flow'rs which paint his vary'd banks,
Parthenius flows. The Ligyan bands ſucceed;

The Martienians, Mariandenians next;
To them the Syrian multitudes, who range
Among the cedars on the ſhaded ridge
Of Libanus; who cultivate the glebe,
Wide water'd by Orontes, who reſide
Near Daphne's grove, or pluck, from loaded palms,
The foodful date, which cluſters on the plains
Of rich Damaſcus. All who bear the name
Of Cappadocians, ſwell the Syrian hoſt,
With thoſe who gather, from the fragrant ſhrub,
The aromatic balſam, and extract
Its milky juice, along the lovely ſide
Of Jordan, winding till immers'd he ſleeps
Beneath a pitchy ſurface, which obſcures
Th' Aſphaltic pool. The Phrygians then advance;
To them their ancient colony are join'd,
Armenia's ſons. Theſe ſee the guſhing founts
Of ſtrong Euphrates cleave the yielding earth,
Then, wide in lakes expanding, hide the plain;
Whence, with collected waters, fierce and deep,
His paſſage rending through diminiſh'd rocks,
To Babylon he foams. Not ſo the ſtream
Of ſoft Araxes to the Caſpian glides;
He, ſtealing unperceptibly, ſuſtains
The green profuſion of Armenia's meads.
Now, ſtrange to view, in ſimilar attire,
But far unlike in manners, to the Greeks,
Appear the Lydians. Wantonneſs and ſport
Were all their care. Beſide Cayſter's brink,
Or ſmooth Mæander, winding ſilent by,
Beſide Pactolean waves, among the vines
Of Timolus riſing, or the wealthy tide
Of golden-ſanded Hermus, they allure
The ſight, enchanted by the graceful dance;
Or with melodious ſweetneſs charm the air,
And melt to ſofteſt languiſhment the ſoul.
What to the field of danger could incite
Theſe tender ſons of Luxury? The laſh
Of their fell ſov'reign drove their ſhiv'ring backs

Through hail and tempeſt, which enrag'd the main,
And ſhook beneath their trembling ſteps the pile
Conjoining Aſia and the weſtern world.
To them Mœonia, hot with ſulph'rous mines,
Unites her troops. No tree adorns their fields,
Unbleſs'd by verdure. Aſhes hide the ſoil:
Black are the rocks, and ev'ry hill deform'd
By conflagration. Helmets preſs their brows.
Two darts they brandiſh. On their woolly veſts
A ſword is girt; and airy hides compoſe
Their bucklers round and ſmall. The Myſians left
Olympus, wood-envelop'd, left the meads,
Waſh'd by Caïcus, and the baneful tide
Of Lycus, nurſe to ſerpents. Next advance
An ancient nation, who in early times
By Trojan arms aſſail'd, their native land
Eſteem'd leſs dear than freedom, and exchang'd
Their ſeat on Strymon, where in Thrace he pours
A freezing current, for the diſtant flood
Of fiſhy Sangar. Theſe, Bithynians nam'd,
Their habitation to the ſacred feet
Of Dindymus extend. Yet there they groan
Beneath oppreſſion, and their freedom mourn,
On Sangar now, as once on Strymon loſt,
The ruddy ſkins of foxes cloath'd their heads:
Their ſhields were faſhion'd like the horned moon;
A veſt embrac'd their bodies; while abroad,
Ting'd with unnumber'd hues, a mantle flow'd.
But other Thracians, who their former name
Retain'd in Aſia, fulgent morions wore,
With horns of bulls, in imitating braſs,
Curv'd o'er the creſted ridge. Phœnician cloth
Their legs infolded. Wont to chaſe the wolf,
A hunter's ſpear they graſp'd. What nations ſtill
On either ſide of Xerxes, while he paſs'd,
Their huge array diſcovering, ſwell his ſoul
With more than mortal pride? The cluſter'd bands
Of Moſchians and Macronians now appear,
The Moſynœcians, who, on berries fed,

In wooden towers along the Pontic ſands
Repoſe their painted limbs; the mirthful race
Of Tibarenians next, whoſe careleſs minds
Delight in play and laughter. Then advance
In garments buckled on their ſpacious cheſts,
A people, deſtin'd in eternal verſe,
E'en thine, ſublime Mœonides, to live.
Theſe are the Mylians. Solymi their name
In thy celeſtial ſtrains; Piſidia's hills
Their dwelling. Once a formidable train,
They fac'd the ſtrong Bellerophon in war.
Now doom'd a more tremendous foe to meet,
Themſelves únnerv'd by thraldom, they muſt leave
Their putrid bodies to the dogs of Greece.
The Marians follow. Next is Aria's hoſt,
Drawn from a region horrid all in thorn,
A dreary waſte of ſands, which mock the toil
Of patient Culture; ſave one favour'd ſpot,
Which from the wild emerges like an iſle,
Attir'd in verdure, interſpers'd with vines
Of gen'rous nurture, yielding juice which ſcorns
The injuries of Time: yet Nature's hand
Had ſown their rocks with coral; had enrich'd
Their deſert hills with veins of ſapphires blue,
Which on the turbant ſhine. On ev'ry neck
The coral bluſhes through the num'rous throng.
The Allarodians, and Saſperian bands,
Equipp'd like Colchians, wield a falchion ſmall.
Their heads are guarded by a helm of wood,
Their lances ſhort, of hides undreſs'd their ſhields.
The Colchians march'd from Phaſis, from the ſtrand
Where once Medea, fair enchantreſs ſtood,
And, wond ring, view'd the firſt adventurous keel
Which cut the Pontic foam. From Argo's ſide
The demigods deſcended, they repair'd
To her ſell ſire's inhoſpitable hall.
His blooming graces Jaſon there diſclos'd,
With ev'ry art of eloquence divine
He claim'd the golden fleece. The virgin heard,

She gaz'd in fatal raviſhment, and lov'd;
Then to the hero ſhe reſigns her heart.
Her magic tames the brazen-footed bulls.
She lulls the ſleepleſs dragon. O'er the main
He wafts the golden prize, and gen'rous fair,
The deſtin'd victim of his treach'rous vows.
The hoſtile Colchians then purſu'd their flight
In vain. By ancient enmity inflam'd,
Or to recal the long forgotten wrong
Compell'd by Xerxes, now they menace Greece
With deſolation. Next in Median garb
A crowd appear'd, who left the peopled iſles
In Perſia's gulf, and round Arabia ſtrewn.
Some in their native topaz were adorn'd,
From Ophiodes, from Topazos ſprung;
Some in the ſhells of tortoiſes, which brood
Around Caſitis' verge. For battle range
Thoſe, who reſide, where, all beſet with palms,
Erythras lies entomb'd, a potent king,
Who nam'd of old the Erythræan main.
On chariots ſcyth'd the Libyans ſat array'd
In ſkins terrific, brandiſhing their darts
Of wood, well-temper'd in the hard'ning flames.
Not Lybia's deſerts from tyrannic ſway
Could hide her ſons; much leſs could Freedom dwell
Amid the plenty of Arabia's fields:
Where ſpicy Caſſia, where the fragant reed,
Where myrrh, and hallow'd frankincenſe perfume
The Zephyr's wing. A bow of largeſt ſize
Th' Arabian carries. O'er his lucid veſt
Looſe floats a mantle, on his ſhoulder claſp'd.
Two choſen myriads on the lofty backs
Of camels rode, who match'd the fleeteſt horſe.
Such were the numbers, which, from Aſia led,
In baſe proſtration bow'd before the wheels
Of Xerxes' chariot. Yet what legions more
The Malian ſand o'erſhadow? Forward rolls
The regal car through nations, who in arms,
In order'd ranks unlike the orient tribes,

Upheld the ſpear and buckler. But, untaught
To bend the ſervile knee, erect they ſtood;
Unleſs that, mourning o'er the ſhameful weight
Of their new bondage, ſome their brows depreſs'd,
Their arms with grief diſtaining. Europe's ſons
Were theſe, whom Xerxes by reſiſtleſs force
Had gather'd round his ſtandards. Murm'ring here,
The ſons of Thrace and Macedonia rang'd;
Here on his ſteed the brave Theſſalian frown'd;
There pin'd reluctant multitudes, of Greece
Redundant plants, in colonies diſpers'd
Between Byzantium, and the Malian bay.

Through all the nations, who ador'd his pride,
Or fear'd his pow'r, the monarch now was paſs'd;
Nor yet among thoſe millions could be found
One, who in beauteous feature might compare,
Or tow'ring ſize with Xerxes. O poſſeſs'd
Of all, but virtue, doom'd to ſhow, how mean,
How weak without her is unbounded pow'r,
The charm of beauty, and the blaze of ſtate,
How inſecure of happineſs, how vain!
Thou, who couldſt mourn the common lot, by heav'n
From none withheld, which oft to thouſands proves
Their only refuge from a tyrant's rage;
Which in conſuming ſickneſs, age, or pain,
Becomes at laſt a ſoothing hope to all:
Thou, who couldſt weep, that nature's gentle hand
Should lay her weary'd offſpring in the tomb;
Yet couldſt remorſeleſs from their peaceful ſeats
Lead half the nations, victims to thy pride,
To famine, plague, and maſſacre a prey:
What didſt thou merit from the injur'd world?
What ſuff'rings to compenſate for the tears
Of Aſia's mothers, for unpeopled realms,
For all this waſte of nature? On his hoſt
Th' exulting monarch bends his haughty ſight,
To Demaratus then directs his voice.

My father, great Darius, to thy mind
Recal, O Spartan. Gracious he receiv'd

Thy wand'ring steps, expell'd their native home.
My favour too remember. To beguile
Thy benefactor, and disfigure truth
Would ill become thee. With consid'rate eyes
Look back on these battalions. Now declare,
If yonder Grecians will oppose their march.
To him the exile. Deem not, mighty lord,
I will deceive thy goodness by a tale
To give them glory, who degraded mine.
Nor be the king offended, while I use
The voice of truth. The Spartans never fly.
Contemptuous smil'd the monarch, and resum'd.
Wilt thou, in Lacedemon once supreme,
Encounter twenty Persians? Yet these Greeks
In greater disproportion must engage
Our host to-morrow. Demaratus then.
By single combat were the trial vain
To show the pow'r of well-united force,
Which oft by military skill surmounts
The weight of numbers. Prince, the diff'rence learn
Between thy warriors, and the sons of Greece.
The flow'r, the safeguard of thy num'rous camp
Are mercenaries. These are canton'd round
Thy provinces. No fertile field demands
Their painful hand to break the fallow glebe.
Them to the noon-day toil no harvest calls.
Nor on the mountain falls the stubborn oak
By their laborious ax. Their watchful eyes
Observe not how the flocks and heifers feed.
To them, of wealth, of all possessions void,
The name of country with an empty sound
Flies o'er the ear, nor warms their joyless hearts,
Who share no country. Needy, yet in scorn
Rejecting labour, wretched by their wants,
Yet profligate through indolence, with limbs
Enervated and soft, with minds corrupt,
From misery, debauchery, and sloth,
Are these to battle drawn against a foe,
Train'd in gymnastic exercise and arms,

Inur'd to hardſhip, and the child of toil.
Wont through the freezing ſhow'r, the wint'ry ſtorm,
O'er his own glebe the tardy ox to goad,
Or in the ſun's impetuous heat to glow
Beneath the burden of his yellow ſheaves;
Whence on himſelf, on her, whoſe faithful arms
Infold him joyful on a growing race,
Which glad his dwelling, plenty he beſtows
With independence. When to battle call'd,
For them his deareſt comfort, and his care,
And for the harveſt, promis'd to his toil,
He lifts the ſhield, nor ſhuns unequal force.
Such are the troops of ev'ry ſtate in Greece.
One only yields a breed more warlike ſtill,
Of whom ſelected bands appear in fight,
All citizens of Sparta. They the glebe
Have never turn'd, nor bound the golden ſheaf,
They are devoted to ſeverer taſks,
For war alone, their ſole delight and care.
From infancy to manhood they are train'd
To winter watches, to inclement ſkies,
To plunge through torrents, brave the tuſky boar,
To arms and wounds; a diſcipline of pain
So fierce, ſo conſtant, that to them a camp
With all its hardſhips is a ſeat of reſt,
And war itſelf remiſſion from their toil.
  Thy words are folly, with redoubled ſcorn
Returns the monarch. Doth not freedom dwell
Among the Spartans? Therefore will they ſhun
Superior foes. The unreſtrain'd and free
Will fly from danger; while my vaſſals, born
To abſolute controlment from their king,
Know, if th' alloted ſtation they deſert,
The ſcourge awaits them, and my heavy wrath.
  To this the exile. O conceive not prince
That Spartans want an object, where to fix
Their eyes in rev'rence, in obedient dread.
To them more awful than the name of king
To Aſia's trembling millions, is the law:

Whose sacred voice enjoins them to confront
Unnumber'd foes, to vanquish, or to die.
Here Demaratus pauses. Xerxes halts.
Its long defile Thermopylæ presents.
The satraps leave the cars. On foot they form
A splendid orb around their lord. By chance
The Spartans then compos'd th' external guard.
They, in a martial exercise employ'd
Heed not the monarch, or his gaudy train;
But poise the spear, protended, as in fight;
Or lifts their adverse shields in single strife;
Or, trooping, forward rush, retreat and wheel
In ranks unbroken, and with equal feet:
While others calm beneath their polish'd helms
Draw down their hair, whose length of sable curls
O'erspread their necks with terror. Xerxes here
The exile questions. What do these intend,
Who with assiduous hands adjust their hair?
To whom the Spartan. O imperial lord,
Such is their custom, to adorn their heads,
When full determin'd to encounter death.
Bring down thy nations in resplendent steel;
Arm, if thou canst, the gen'ral race of man,
All, who possess the regions unexplor'd
Beyond the Ganges, all whose wand'ring steps
Above the Caspian range the Scythian wild,
With those, who drink the secret fount of Nile:
Yet to Laconian bosoms shall dismay
Remain a stranger. Fervour from his lips
Thus breaks aloud; when, gushing from his eyes,
Resistless grief o'erflows his cheeks. Aside
His head he turns. He weeps in copious streams.
The keen remembrance of his former state,
His dignity, his greatness, and the sight
Of those brave ranks, which thus unshaken stood,
And spread amazement through the world in arms,
Excite these sorrows. His impassion'd looks
Review the godlike warriors, who beneath
His standard once victorious fought, who call'd

Him once their king, their leader; then again,
O'ercharg'd with anguish, he bedews with tears
His rev'rend beard, in agony bemoans
His faded honours, his illustrious name
Forgotten long, his majesty defil'd
By exile, by dependence. So obscur'd
By sordid moss, and ivy's creeping leaf,
Some princely palace, or stupendous fane
Magnificent in ruin nods; where time
From under shelving architraves hath mow'd
The column down, and cleft the pond'rous dome.
Not unobserv'd by Hyperanthes, mourn'd
Th' unhappy Spartan. Kindly in his own
He press'd the exile's hand, and thus humane.
O Demaratus, in this grief I see
How just thy praises of Laconia's state,
Though cherish'd here with universal love,
Thou still deplor'st thy absence from her face,
How e'er averse to thine. But swift relief
From indignation borrow. Call to mind
Thy injuries. Th' auspicious fortune bless
Which led thee, far from calumny and fraud,
To peace, to honour in the Persian court.
As Demaratus with a grateful mind
His answer was preparing, Persia's king
Stern interrupted. Soon as morning shines,
Do you, Tigranes and Phraortes, head
The Medes and Cissians. Bring these Grecians bound.
This said, the monarch to his camp returns.
Th' attendant princes re-ascend their cars,
Save Hyperanthes, by the Carian queen
Detain'd, who thus began. Impartial, brave,
Nurs'd in a court, yet virtuous, let my heart
To thee its feelings undisguis'd reveal.
Thou hear'st thy royal brother. He demands
These Grecians bound. Why stops his mandate there?
Why not command the mountains to remove,
Or sink to level plains. Yon Spartans view,
Their weighty arms, their countenance. To die

My gratitude inſtructs me in the cauſe
Of our imperial maſter. To ſucceed
Is not within the ſhadow of my hopes
At this dire paſs. What evil genius ſways?
Tigranes, falſe Argeſtes, and the reſt
In name a council, ceaſeleſs have oppos'd
My dictates oft repeated in deſpight
Of purple flatt'rers, to embark a force,
Which, pouring on Laconia, might confine
Theſe ſons of valour to their own defence.
Vain are my words. The royal ear admits
Their ſound alone; while Adulation's notes
In ſyren ſweetneſs penetrate his heart,
There lodge enſnaring miſchief. In a ſigh
To her the prince. O faithful to thy lord,
Diſcreet adviſer, and in action firm,
What can I anſwer? My afflicted ſoul
Muſt ſeek its refuge in a feeble hope.
Thou mayſt be partial to thy Doric race,
Mayſt magnify our danger. Let me hope,
Whate'er the danger, if extreme, believe
That Hyperanthes for his prince can bleed
Not with leſs zeal than Spartans for their laws.
They ſeparate. To Xerxes he repairs.
The queen, ſurrounded by the Carian guard,
Stays and retraces with ſagacious ken
The deſtin'd field of war, the vary'd ſpace,
Its depth, its confines both of hill and ſea.
Meantime a ſcene more ſplendid hath allur'd
Her ſon's attention. His tranſported ſight
With ecſtaſy like worſhip long purſues
The pomp of Xerxes in retreat, the throne,
Which ſhow'd their idol to the nations round,
The bounding ſteeds, capariſon'd in gold,
The plumes, the chariots, ſtandards. He excites
Her care, expreſs'd in theſe pathetic ſtrains.
Look on the king with gratitude. His ſire
Protected thine. Himſelf upholds our ſtate.
By loyalty inflexible repay

The obligation. To immortal pow'rs
The adoration of thy ſoul confine;
And look undazzling on the pomp of man
Moſt weak, when higheſt. Then the jealous gods
Watch to ſupplant him. They his paths, his courts,
His chambers fill with Flatt'ry's pois'nous ſwarms,
Whoſe honey'd bane, by kingly pride devour'd,
Conſumes the health of kingdoms. Here the boy,
By an attention, which ſurpaſs'd his years,
Unlocks her inmoſt boſom. Thrice accurs'd
Be thoſe, th' indignant heroine purſues,
Thoſe who have tempted their imperial lord
To that prepoſt'rous arrogance, which caſt
Chains in the deep to manacle the waves,
Chaſtis'd with ſtripes in heav'ns offended ſight
The Helleſpont, and fondly now demands
The Spartans bound. O child, my ſoul's delight,
Train'd by my care to equitable ſway,
And imitation of the gods, by deeds
To merit their protection, heed my voice.
They, who alone can tame, or ſwell the floods,
Compoſe the winds, or guide their ſtrong career,
O'erwhelming human greatneſs, will confound
Such vanity in mortals. On our fleet
Their indignation hath already fall'n.
Perhaps our boaſted army is prepar'd
A prey, for death to vindicate their pow'r.
This ſaid, a curious ſearch in ev'ry part
Her eye renews. Adjoining to the ſtreights,
Freſh bloom'd a thicket of entwining ſhrubs,
A ſeeming fence to ſome ſequeſter'd ground,
By travellers unbeaten. Swift her guards
Addreſs'd their ſpears to part the pliant boughs.
Held back, they yield a paſſage to the queen
And princely boy. Delicious to their ſight
Soft dales, meand'ring, ſhow their flow'ry laps
Among rude piles of nature. In their ſides
Of rock are manſions hewn; nor loaden trees
Of cluſter'd fruit are wanting: but no ſound,

Except of brooks in murmur, and the song
Of winged warblers, meets the list'ning ear.
No grazing herd, no flock, nor human form
Is seen, no careful husband at his toil,
Beside her threshold no industrious wife,
No playful child. Instructive to her son
The princess then. Already these abodes
Are desolate. Once happy in their homes
Th' inhabitants forsake them. Pleasing scene
Of Nature's bounty, soon will savage Mars
Deform the lovely ringlets of thy shrubs,
And coarsely pluck thy violated fruits
Unripe; will deafen with his clangour fell
Thy tuneful choirs. I mourn thy destin'd spoil,
Yet come thy first despoiler. Captains, plant,
Ere morning breaks, my secret standard here.
Come, boy, away. Thy safety will I trust
To Demaratus; while thy mother tries,
With these her martial followers, what sparks,
Left by our Doric fathers, yet inflame
Their sons and daughters in a stern debate
With other Dorians, who have never breath'd
The soft'ning gales of Asia, never bow'd
In forc'd allegiance to Barbarian thrones.
Thou heed my order. Those ingenuous looks
Of discontent suppress. For thee this fight
Were too severe a lesson. Thou might'st bleed
Among the thousands, fated to expire
By Sparta's lance. Let Artemisia die,
Ye all-disposing rulers, but protect
Her son. She ceas'd. The lioness, who reigns
Queen of the forest, terrible in strength,
And prone to fury, thus by nature taught,
Melts o'er her young in blandishment and love.
Now slowly tow'rds the Persian camp her steps
In silence she directed; when a voice,
Sent from a rock, accessible which seem'd
To none, but feather'd passengers of air,
By this reproof detain'd her. Caria's queen

Art thou, to Greece by Doric blood ally'd?
Com'ſt thou to lay her fruitful meadows waſte,
Thou homager of tyrants? Upward gaz'd
Th' aſtoniſh'd princeſs. Lo! a female ſhape,
Tall and majeſtic, from th' impendent ridge
Look'd awful down. A holy fillet bound
Her graceful hair, looſe flowing. Seldom wept
Great Artemiſia. Now a ſpringing tear
Between her eyelids gleam'd Too true, ſhe ſigh'd,
A homager of tyrants! Voice auſtere,
And preſence half divine! Again the voice.
O Artemiſia, hide thy Doric ſword.
Let no barbarian tyrant, through thy might,
Thy counſels, valiant as thou art and wiſe,
Conſume the holy fanes, deface the tombs,
Subvert the laws of Greece, her ſons enthral.
The queen made no reply. Her breaſt-plate heav'd.
The tremulous attire of cov'ring mail
Confeſs'd her ſtruggle. She at length exclaim'd.
Olympian thund'rer, from thy neighb'ring hill
Of ſacred oaths remind me! Then aſide
She turns to ſhun that majeſty of form,
In ſolemn ſounds upbraiding. Torn her thoughts
She feels. A painful conflict ſhe endures
With recollection of her Doric race;
Till gratitude, reviving, arms her breaſt.
Her royal benefactor ſhe recals,
Back to his ſight precipitates her ſteps.

BOOK V.

The Argument.

LEONIDAS, rising by break of day, hears the intelligence which Agis and Melibœus bring from the upper pass, then commands a body of Arcadians, with the Platæans and Thespians, to be drawn out for battle, under the conduct of Demophilus, in that part of Thermopylæ which lies close to the Phocian wall, from whence he harangues them. The enemy approaches. Diomedon kills Tigranes in single combat. Both armies join battle. Dithyrambus kills Phraortes. The Persians, entirely defeated, are pursued by Demophilus to the extremity of the pass. The Arcadians, inconsiderately advancing beyond it, fall into ambush, which Artemisia had laid to cover the retreat of the Persians. She kills Clonius, but is herself repulsed by Demophilus. Diomedon and Dithyrambus give chase to her broken forces over the plains, in the sight of Persia's camp, whence she receives no assistance. She rallies a small body, and, facing the enemy, disables Dithyrambus by a blow on his helmet. This puts the Grecians into some confusion, and gives her an opportunity of preserving the remainder of the Carians by a timely retreat. She gains the camp, accuses Argestes of treachery, but pacified by Demaratus, is accompanied by him with a thousand horse, to collect the dead bodies of her soldiers for sepulchre.

AURORA dawn'd. Leonidas arose.
With Melibœus Agis, now return'd,
Address'd the king. Along the mountain's side
We bent our journey. On our way a voice,
Loud from a crag, on Melibœus call'd.
He look'd and answer'd. Mycon, ancient friend!
Far hast thou driv'n thy bearded train to-day;
But fortunate thy presence. None-like thee,
Inhabitant of Oeta from thy birth,
Can furnish that intelligence, which Greece
Wants for her safety. Mycon show'd a track.
We mounted high. The summit where we stopp'd
Gave to the sight a prospect wide o'er hills,
O'er dales and forests, rocks, and dashing floods
In cataracts. The object of our search
Beneath us lay, the secret pass to Greece,
Where not five warriors in a rank can tread.
We thence descended to the Phocian camp,
Beset with scatter'd oaks, which rose and spread
In height and shade; on whose sustaining boughs
Were hung in snowy folds a thousand tents,
Containing each a Phocian heavy-mail'd,
With two light-weapon'd menials. Northward ends
The vale, contracted to that narrow streight,
Which first we saw with Mycon. Prudent care

Like yours alleviates mine, well pleas'd the king
Reply'd. Now, Agis, from Arcadia's bands
Select a thousand spears. To them unite
The Thespians and Platæans. Draw their lines
Beneath the wall, which fortifies the pass.
There, close embody'd, will their might repulse
The num'rous foe. Demophilus salute.
Approv'd in martial service him I name
The chief supreme. Obedient to his will
Th' appointed warriors, issuing from the tents,
Fill their deep files, and watch the high command.
So round their monarch, in his stormy hall,
The winds assemble. From his dusky throne
His dreadful mandates Æolus proclaims
To swell the main, or heav'n with clouds deform,
Or bend the forest from the mountain's brow.
Laconia's leader from the rampart's height
To battle thus the list'ning host inflames.

This day, O Grecians, countrymen, and friends,
Your wives, your offspring, your paternal seats,
Your parents, country, liberty, and laws,
Demand your swords. You, gen'rous, active, brave,
Vers'd in the various discipline of Mars,
Are now to grapple with ignoble foes
In war unskilful, nature's basest dross,
And thence a monarch's mercenary slaves.
Relax'd their limbs, their spirits are deprav'd
By eastern sloth and pleasures. Hire their cause,
Their only fruit of victory is spoil.
They know not freedom, nor its lib'ral cares.
Such is the flow'r of Asia's host. The rest,
Who fill her boasted numbers, are a crowd,
Forc'd from their homes; a populace in peace
By jealous tyranny disarm'd, in war
Their tyrant's victims. Taught in passive grief
To bear the rapine, cruelty, and spurns
Of Xerxes' mercenary band, they pine
In servitude to slaves. With terror sounds
The trumpet's clangour in their trembling ears.

Unwonted loads, the buckler and the lance
Their hands ſuſtain, encumber'd, and preſent
The mockery of war.---But ev'ry eye
Shoots fourth impatient flames. Your gallant breaſts
Too long their ſwelling ſpirit have confin'd.
Go then, ye ſons of liberty; go ſweep
Theſe bondmen from the field. Reſiſtleſs rend
The glitt'ring ſtandard from their ſervile graſp.
Hurl to the ground their ignominions heads,
The warrior's helm profaning. Think, the ſhades
Of your forefathers lift their ſacred brows,
Here to enjoy the glory of their ſons.
He ſpake. Loud pæans iſſue from the Greeks.
In fierce reply barbarian ſhouts aſcend
From hoſtile nations, thronging down the paſs.
Such is the roar of Ætna, when his mouth
Diſplodes combuſtion from his ſulph'rous depths,
To blaſt the ſmiles of nature. Dauntleſs ſtood,
In deep array before the Phocian wall,
The phalanx, wedg'd with implicated ſhields,
And ſpears protended, like the graceful range
Of arduous elms, whoſe interwoven boughs
Before ſome rural palace, wide expand
Their venerable umbrage, to retard
The North's impetuous wing. As o'er the main,
In lucid rows, the riſing waves reflect
The ſun's effulgence; ſo the Grecian helms
Return'd his light, which o'er their convex pour'd
A ſplendour, ſcatter'd through the dancing plumes.
Down ruſh the foes. Exulting in their van,
Their haughty leader ſhakes his threatning lance,
Provoking battle. Inſtant from his rank
Diomedon burſts furious. On he ſtrides,
Confronts Tigranes, whom he thus defies.
Now art thou met, barbarian. Wouldſt thou prove
Thy actions equal to thy vaunts, command
Thy troops to halt, while thou and I engage.
Tigranes, turning to the Perſians, ſpake.
My friends and ſoldiers, check your martial haſte,

While my strong lance that Grecian's pride confounds.
He ceas'd. In dreadful opposition soon
Each combatant advanc'd. Their sinewy hands
Grip'd fast their spears, high brandish'd. Thrice they drove,
With well directed force the pointed steel
At either's throat, and thrice their wary shields
Repell'd the menac'd wound. The Asian chief,
At length, with pow'rs collected for the stroke,
His weapon rivets in the Grecian targe.
Aside Diomedon inclines, and shuns
Approaching fate; then all his martial skill
Undaunted summons. His forsaken spear
Beside him cast, his faulchion he unsheaths.
The blade, descending on Tigranes' arm,
That instant struggling to redeem his lance,
The nervous hand dissevers. Pale affright
Unmans the Persian; while his active foe
Full on his neck discharg'd the rapid sword,
Which open'd wide the purple gates of Death.
Low sinks Tigranes in eternal shade.
His postrate limbs the conqueror bestrides;
Then in a tuft of blood-distilling hair
His hand entwining, from the mangled trunk
The head disjoins, and whirls with matchless strength
Among the adverse legions. All in dread
Recoil'd, where'er the ghastly visage flew
In sanguine circles, and pursu'd its track
Of horror through the air. Not more amaz'd,
A barb'rous nation, whom the cheerful dawn
Of science ne'er illumin'd, view on high
A meteor, waving its portentous fires;
Where oft, as superstition vainly dreams,
Some demon sits amid the baneful blaze,
Dispersing plague and desolation round.
A while the stern Diomedon remain'd
Triumphant o'er the dire dismay, which froze
The heart of Persia; then with haughty pace
In sullen joy among his gladsome friends
Resum'd his station. Still the hostile throng

In conſternation motionleſs ſuſpend
The charge. Their drooping hearts Phraortes warms.
Heav'n! can one leader's fate appal this hoſt,
Which counts a train of princes for its chiefs?
Behold Phraortes. From Niphates' ridge
I draw my ſubject files. My hardy toil
Through pathleſs woods and deſerts hath explor'd
The tiger's cavern. This unconquer'd hand
Hath from the lion rent his ſhaggy hide.
So through this field of ſlaughter will I chaſe
Yon vaunting Greek. His ardent words revive
Declining valour in the van. His lance
Then in the rear he brandiſhes. The crowd
Before his threat'ning ire, affrighted, roll
Their numbers headlong on the Grecian ſteel.
Thus, with his trident, Ocean's angry god
From their vaſt bottom turns the mighty maſs
Of waters upward, and o'erwhelms the beach.
Tremendous frown'd the fierce Platæan chief
Full in the battle's front. His ample ſhield
Like a ſtrong bulwark prominent he rais'd
Before the line. There thunder'd all the ſtorm
Of darts and arrows. His undaunted train
In emulating ardour charg'd the foe.
Where'er they turn'd the formidable ſpears,
Which drench'd the glebe of Marathon in blood,
Barbarian dead lay heap'd. Diomedon
Led on the ſlaughter. From his nodding creſt
The ſable plumes ſhook terror. Aſia's hoſt
Shrunk back, as blaſted by the piercing beams
Of that unconquerable ſword, which fell
With lightning's ſwiftneſs on diſſever'd helms,
And, menacing Tigranes' doom to all,
Their multitude diſpers'd. The furious chief,
Encompaſs'd round by carnage, and beſmear'd
With ſanguine drops, enflames his warlike friends.
O Dithyrambus, let thy deeds this day
Surmount their wonted luſtre. Thou in arms,
Demophilus, worn grey, thy youth recal.

Behold, these slaves without resistance bleed.
Advance, my hoary friend. Propitious Fame
Smiles on thy years. She grants thy aged hand
To pluck fresh laurels for thy honour'd brow.
As, when endu'd with Promethean heat,
The molten clay respir'd, a sudden warmth
Glows in the venerable Thespian's veins;
In ev'ry sinew new-born vigour swells;
His falchion, thund'ring on Cherames' helm,
The forehead cleaves. Ecbatana to war
Sent forth Cherames. From her potent gates
He proud in hope her swarming numbers led.
Him Ariazus and Peuceste join'd,
His martial brothers. They attend his fate,
By Dithyrambus pierc'd. Their hoary sire
Shall o'er his solitary palace roam;
Lamenting loud his childless years, shall curse
Ambition's fury, and the lust of war,
Then, pining, bow in anguish to the grave.
Next by the fierce Platæan's fatal sword
Expir'd Damates, once the host and friend
Of fall'n Tigranes. By his side to fight
He left his native bands. Of Syrian birth,
In Daphné he resided, near the grove
Whose hospitable laurels in their shade
Conceal'd the virgin fugitive averse
To young Apollo. Hither she retir'd
Far from her parent stream. Here fables feign,
Herself a laurel chang'd her golden hair
To verdant leaves in this retreat, the grove
Of Daphné call'd, the seat of rural bliss,
Fann'd by the breath of zephyrs, and with rills
From bubbling founts irriguous, Syria's boast
The happy rival of Thessalia's vale,
Now hid for ever from Damates' eyes.
Demophilus, wise leader, soon improves
Advantage. All the vet'rans of his troop,
In age his equals, to condense the files,
To rivet close their bucklers, he commands.

As ſome broad veſſel, heavy in her ſtrength,
But well-compacted, when a fav'ring gale
Invites the ſkilful maſter to expand
The ſails at large, her ſlow but ſteady courſe
Impels through myriads of dividing waves;
So, unreſiſted, through Barbarian throngs
The hoary phalanx paſs'd. Arcadia's ſons
Purſu'd more ſwift. Gigantic Clonius preſs'd
The yielding Perſians, who before him ſunk,
Cruſh'd like vile ſtubble underneath the ſteps
Of ſome glad peaſant, viſiting his fields
Of new-ſhorn harveſt. On the gen'ral rout
Phraortes look'd, intrepid ſtill. He ſprang
O'er hills of carnage to confront the foe.
His own inglorious friends he thus reproach'd.
Fly then, ye cowards, and deſert your chief.
Yet ſingle here my target ſhall oppoſe
The ſhock of thouſands. Raging, he impels
His deathful point through Ariſtander's breaſt.
Him Dithyrambus lov'd. A ſacred bard,
Rever'd for juſtice, for his verſe renown'd,
He ſung the deeds of heroes, thoſe who fell,
Or thoſe who conquer'd in their country's cauſe,
Th' enraptur'd ſoul inſpiring with the love
Of glory, earn'd by virtue. His high ſtrain
The muſes favour'd from their neighb'ring bow'rs,
And bleſs'd with heav'nly melody his lyre.
No more from Theſpia ſhall his feet aſcend
The ſhady ſteep of Helicon; no more
The ſtream divine of Aganippe's fount
Bedew his lip harmonious: nor his hands,
Which, dying, graſp the unforſaken lance,
And proſtrate buckler, evermore accord
His lofty numbers to the ſounding ſhell.
Lo! Dithyrambus weeps. Amid the rage
Of war and conqueſt ſwiftly-guſhing tears
Find one ſad moment's interval to fall
On his pale friend. But ſoon the victor proves
His ſtern revenge. Through ſhield and corſelet plung'd

His forceful blade divides the Perſian's cheſt;
Whence iſſue ſtreams of royal blood, deriv'd
From anceſtors, who ſway'd in Ninus old
Th' Aſſyrian ſceptre. He to Xerxes' throne
A tributary ſatrap rul'd the vales,
Where Tigris ſwift between the parted hills
Of tall Niphates drew his foamy tide,
Impregnating the meads. Phraortes ſinks,
Not inſtantly expiring. Still his eyes
Flaſh indignation, while the Perſians fly.
Beyond the Malian entrance of the ſtreights
Th' Arcadians ruſh; when, unperceiv'd till felt,
Spring from concealment in a thicket deep
New ſwarms of warriors, cluſt'ring on the flank
Of theſe unwary Grecians. Tow'rd the bay
They ſhrink; they totter on the fearful edge,
Which overhangs a precipice. Surpris'd,
The ſtrength of Clonius fails. His giant bulk
Beneath the chieftain of th' aſſailing band
Falls proſtrate. Theſpians and Platæans wave
Auxiliar enſigns. They encounter foes
Reſembling Greeks in diſcipline and arms.
Dire is the ſhock. What leſs, than Caria's queen
In her career of victory could check
Such warriors? Fierce ſhe ſtruggles; while the rout
Of Medes and Ciſſians carry to the camp
Contagious terror; thence no ſuccour flows.
Demophilus ſtands firm; the Carian band
At length recoil before him. Ke n purſuit
He leaves to others, like th' Almighty Sire,
Who ſits unſhaken on his throne, while floods,
His inſtruments of wrath, o'erwhelm the earth,
And whirlwinds level on her hills the growth
Of proudeſt cedars. Through the yielding crowd
Platæa's chief and Dithyrambus range
Triumphant ſide by ſide. Thus o'er the field,
Where bright Alpheus heard the rattling car
And concave hoof along his echoing banks,
Two gen'rous courſers, link'd in mutual reins,

In ſpeed, in ardour equal, beat the duſt
To reach the glories of Olympia's goal.
Th' intrepid heroes on the plain advance;
They preſs the Carian rear. Not long the queen
Endures that ſhame. Her people's dying groans
Tranſpierce her boſom. On their bleeding limbs
She looks maternal, feels maternal pangs.
A troop ſhe rallies. Goddeſs-like ſhe turns
Not leſs than Pallas with her Gorgon ſhield.
Whole ranks ſhe covers, like th' imperial bird
Extending o'er a neſt of callow young
Her pinion broad, and pointing fierce her beak,
Her claws outſtretch'd. The Theſpian's ardent hand,
From common lives refraining, haſtes to ſnatch
More ſplendid laurels from that nobler head.
His pond'rous falchion, ſwift deſcending, bears
Her buckler down, thence glancing, cuts the thong,
Which holds her headpiece faſt. That golden fence
Drops down. Thick treſſes, unconfin'd, diſcloſe
A female warrior; one whoſe ſummer pride
Of fleeting beauty had begun to fade,
Yet by th' heroic character ſupply'd,
Which grew more awful, as the touch of Time
Remov'd the ſoft'ning graces. Back he ſteps,
Unmann'd by wonder. With indignant eyes,
Fire-darting, ſhe advances. Both her hands
Full on his creſt diſcharge the furious blade.
The forceful blow compels him to recede
Yet further back, unwounded, though confus'd.
His ſoldiers flock around him. From a ſcene
Of blood more diſtant, ſpeeds Platæa's chief.
The fair occaſion of ſuſpended fight
She ſeizes, bright in glory wheels away,
And ſaves her Carian remnant; while his friend
In fervent ſounds Diomedon beſpake.
If thou art ſlain, I curſe this glorious day.
Be all thy trophies, be my own accurs'd.
The youth, recover'd, anſwers in a ſmile.
I am unhurt. The weighty blow proclaim'd

The queen of Caria, or Bellona's arm.
Our longer ſtay Demophilus may blame.
Let us prevent his call. This ſaid, their ſteps
They turn, both ſtriding through empurpled heaps
Of arms, and mangled ſlain, themſelves with gore
Diſtain'd like two grim tigers, who have forc'd
A nightly manſion, on the deſert rais'd
By ſome lone-wand'ring traveller, then dy'd
In human crimſon, through the foreſt deep
Back to their covert's dreary gloom retire.
Stern Artemiſia, ſweeping o'er the field,
Burſts into Aſia's camp. A furious look
She caſts around. Abrocomes remote
With Hyperanthes from the king were ſent.
She ſees Argeſtes in that quarter chief,
Who from battalions numberleſs had ſpar'd
Not one to ſuccour, but his malice gorg'd
With her diſtreſs. Her anger now augments.
Revenge frowns gloomy on her darken'd brow.
He cautious moves to Xerxes, where he ſat
High on his car. She follows. Loſt her helm,
Reſign'd to ſportive winds her cluſter'd locks,
Wild, but majeſtic, like the waving boughs
Of ſome proud elm, the glory of the grove,
And full in foliage. Her emblazon'd ſhield
With gore is tarniſh'd. Pale around are ſeen
All faint, all ghaſtly from repeated wounds
Her bleeding ſoldiers. Brandiſhing her ſword,
To them ſhe points, to Xerxes thus ſhe ſpeaks.
Behold theſe mangled Carians, who have ſpent
Their vital current in the king's defence,
E'en in his ſight; while Medes and Ciſſians fled,
By theſe protected, whom Argeſtes ſaw
Purſu'd by ſlaughter to thy very camp,
Yet left unhelp'd to periſh. Ruling fire,
Let Horomazes be thy name, or Jove,
To thee appealing, of the king I claim
A day for juſtice. Monarch, to my arm
Give him a prey. Let Artemiſia's truth

Chaſtiſe his treaſon. With an eye ſubmiſs,
A mien obſequious, and a ſoothing tone,
To cheat the king, to moderate her ire,
Argeſtes utters theſe fallacious words.
May Horomazes leave the fiend at large
To blaſt my earthly happineſs, confine
Amid the horrors of his own abode
My ghoſt hereafter, if the ſacred charge
Of Xerxes' perſon was not my reſtraint,
My ſole reſtraint! To him our all is due,
Our all how trifling, with his ſafety weigh'd.
His preſervation I prefer to fame,
And bright occaſion for immortal deeds
Forego in duty. Elſe my helpful ſword,
Fair heroine of Aſia, hadſt thou ſeen
Among the foremoſt blazing. Lo! the king
A royal preſent will on thee beſtow,
Perfumes and precious unguents on the dead,
A golden wreath to each ſurvivor brave.
Aw'd by her ſpirit, by the flatt'rers ſpell
Deluded, languid through diſmay and ſhame
At his defeat, the monarch for a time
Sat mute, at length unlock'd his falt'ring lips.
Thou hear'ſt, great princeſs. Reſt content. His words
I ratify. Yet farther, I proclaim
Thee of my train firſt counſellor and chief.
O eagle ey'd diſcernment in the king!
O wiſdom equal to his boundleſs power!
The purpled ſycophant exclaims. Thou ſeeſt
Her matchleſs talents. Wanting her, thy fleet,
The floating bulwark of our hopes, laments,
Foil'd in her abſence, in her conduct ſafe.
Thy penetrating ſight directs the field;
There let her worth be hazarded no more.
Thy words are wiſe, the blinded prince rejoins.
Return, brave Carian, to thy naval charge.
Thus to remove her from the royal ear
Malicious guile prevails. Redoubled rage

Swells in her bosom. Demaratus sees
And calms the storm, by rendering up his charge
To her maternal hand. Her son belov'd
Dispels the furies. Then the Spartan thus:
O Artemisia, of the king's command
Be thou observant. To thy slaughter'd friends
Immediate care, far other than revenge,
Is due. The ravens gather. From his nest
Among those clifts the eagle's rapid flight
Denotes his scent of carnage. Thou, a Greek,
Well know'st the duty sacred to the dead.
Depart; thy guide is Piety. Collect,
For honourable sepulchres prepare
Those bodies, mark'd with honourable wounds.
I will assist thee. Xerxes will entrust
To my command a chosen guard of horse.
As oft, when storms in summer have o'ercast
The night with double darkness, only pierc'd
By heav'n's blue fire, while thunder shakes the pole,
The orient sun, diffusing genial warmth,
Refines the troubled air; the blast is mute;
Death-pointed flames disperse; and placid Jove
Looks down in smiles: so prudence from the lips
Of Demaratus, by his tone, his mien,
His aspect strength'ning smooth Persuasion's flow,
Compos'd her spirit. She with him departs.
The king assigns a thousand horse to guard
Th' illustrious exile and heroic dame.

BOOK VI.

The Argument.

THE Grecian commanders, after the purſuit, retire for refreſhment to cave in the ſide of Mount Oeta. Demophilus returns to the camp; Diomedon remains in the cave; while Dithyrambus, diſcovering a paſſage through it, aſcends to the temple of the Muſes. After a long diſcourſe with Meliſſa, the daughter of Oileus, ſhe intruſts him with a ſolemn meſſage to Leonidas. Dithyrambus deputes this charge to Megiſtias, the augur. Leonidas, recalling the forces firſt engaged, ſends down a freſh body. Diomedon and Dithyrambus are permitted, on their own requeſt, to continue in the field with the Platæans. By the advice of Diomedon, the Grecians advance to the broadeſt part of Thermopylæ, where they form a line of twenty in depth, conſiſting of the Platæans, Mantineans, Tegæans, Thebans, Corinthians, Phliaſians, and Mycenæans. The Spartans compoſe a ſecond line in a narrower part. Behind them are placed the light armed troops under Alpheus, and further back a phalanx of Locrians under Medon, the ſon of Oileus. Dieneces commands the whole.

NOW Dithyrambus and Platæa's chief,
Their former poſt attaining, had rejoin'd
Demophilus. Recumbent on his ſhield
Phraortes, gaſping there, attracts their ſight.
To him in pity Theſpia's gallant youth
Approaching, thus his gen'rous ſoul expreſs'd.
Liv'ſt thou, brave Perſian? By propitious Jove,
From whom the pleaſing ſtream of mercy flows
Through mortal boſoms, leſs my ſoul rejoic'd,
When Fortune bleſs'd with victory my arm,
Than now to raiſe thee from this field of death.
His languid eyes the dying prince unclos'd,
Then with expiring voice. Vain man, forbear
To proffer me, what ſoon thyſelf muſt crave.
The day is quite extinguiſh'd in theſe orbs.
One moment fate allows me to diſdain
Thy mercy, Grecian. Now I yield to death.
This effort made, the haughty ſpirit fled.
So ſhoots a meteor's tranſitory gleam
Through nitrous folds of black nocturnal clouds,
Then diſſipates for ever. O'er the corſe
His rev'rend face Demophilus inclin'd,
Pois'd on his lance! and thus addreſs'd the ſlain.
Alas! how glorious were that bleeding breaſt,
Had Juſtice brac'd the buckler on thy arm,
And to preſerve a people bade thee die.
Who now ſhall mourn thee! Thy ungrateful king

Will soon forget thy worth. Thy native land
May raise an empty monument, but feel
No public sorrow. Thy recorded name
Shall wake among thy countrymen no sighs
For their lost hero. What to them avail'd
Thy might, thy dauntless spirit? Not to guard
Their wives, their offspring from th' oppressor's hand;
But to extend oppression didst thou fall,
Perhaps with inborn virtues in thy soul,
Which, but thy froward destiny forbade,
By freedom cherish'd, might have bless'd mankind.
All-bounteous Nature, thy impartial laws
To no selected race of men confine
The sense of glory, fortitude, and all
The nobler passions, which exalt the mind,
And render life illustrious. These thou plant'st
In ev'ry soil. But freedom, like the sun,
Must warm the gen'rous seeds. By her alone
They bloom, they flourish: while oppression blasts
The tender virtues: hence a spurious growth,
False honour, savage valour, taint the soul,
And wild ambition: hence rapacious pow'r
The ravag'd earth unpeoples, and the brave,
A feast for dogs, th' enfanguin'd field bestrew.
He said. Around the venerable man
The warriors throng'd attentive. Conquest hush'd
Its joyful transports. O'er the horrid field,
Rude scene so late of tumult, all was calm.
So, when the song of Thracian Orpheus drew
To Hebrus' margin from their dreary seats
The savage breed, which Hæmus, wrapp'd in clouds,
Pangæus cold, and Rhodopean snows
In blood and discord nurs'd, the soothing strain
Flow'd with enchantment through the ravish'd ear,
Their fierceness melted, and, amaz'd, they learn'd
The sacred laws of justice, which the bard
Mix'd with the music of his heavenly string.
Meantime th' Arcadians with inverted arms
And banners, sad and solemn on their shields

The giant limbs of Clonius bore along
To ſpread a gen'ral woe. The nobler corſe,
Dire ſpectacle of carnage, paſſing by
To thoſe laſt honours, which the dead partake,
Struck Dithyrambus. Swift his melted eye
Review'd Phraortes on the rock ſupine;
Then on the ſage Demophilus he look'd
Intent, and ſpake. My heart retains thy words.
This hour may witneſs how rapacious pow'r
The earth unpeoples. Clonius is no more.
But he, by Greece lamented, will acquire
A ſignal tomb. This gallant Perſian, cruſh'd
Beneath my fortune, bath'd in blood ſtill warm,
May lie forgotten by his thankleſs king;
Yet not by me neglected ſhall remain
A naked corſe. The good old man replies.
My gen'rous child, deſerving that ſucceſs
Thy arm hath gain'd! When vital breath is fled,
Our friends, our foes, are equal duſt. Both claim
The fun'ral paſſage to that future ſeat
Of being, where no enmity revives.
There Greek and Perſian will together quaff
In amaranthine bow'rs the cup of bliſs
Immortal. Him thy valour ſlew on earth,
In that bleſs'd region thou may'ſt find a friend.
This ſaid, the ready Theſpians he commands
To lift Phraortes from his bed of death,
Th' empurpled rock. Outſtretch'd on targets broad,
Suſtain'd by hands late hoſtile, now humane,
He follows Clonius to the fun'ral pyre.
A cave not diſtant from the Phocian wall
Through Oeta's cloven ſide had nature form'd
In ſpacious windings. This in moſs ſhe clad;
O'er half the entrance downward from the roots
She hung the ſhaggy trunks of branching firs,
To heav'n's hot ray impervious. Near the mouth
Relucent laurels ſpread before the ſun
A broad and vivid foliage. High above,
The hill was darken'd by a ſolemn ſhade,

Diffus'd from ancient cedars. To this cave
Diomedon, Demophilus resort,
And Thespia's youth. A deep recess appears,
Cool as the azure grot, where Thetis sleeps
Beneath the vaulted ocean. Whisper'd sounds
Of waters, trilling from the riven stone
To feed a fountain on the rocky floor,
In purest streams o'erflowing to the sea,
Allure the warriors hot with toil and thirst
To this retreat serene. Against the sides
Their disencumber'd hands repose their shields;
The helms they loosen from their glowing cheeks;
Propp'd on their spears, they rest: when Agis brings
From Lacedemon's leader these commands.
Leonidas recals you from your toils,
Ye meritorious Grecians. You have reap'd
The first bright harvest on the field of fame.
Our eyes in wonder from the Phocian wall
On your unequall'd deeds incessant gaz'd.
To whom Platæa's chief. Go, Agis, say
To Lacedemon's ruler, that, untir'd,
Diomedon can yet exalt his spear,
Nor feels the armour heavy on his limbs.
Then shall I quit the contest? Ere he sinks,
Shall not this early sun again behold
The slaves of Xerxes tremble at my lance,
Should they adventure on a fresh assault?
To him the Thespian youth. My friend, my guide
To noble actions, since thy gen'rous heart
Intent on fame disdains to rest, O grant
I too thy glorious labours may partake,
May learn once more to imitate thy deeds.
Thou, gentlest Agis, Sparta's king entreat
Not to command us from the field of war.
Yes, persevering heroes, he reply'd
I will return, will Sparta's king entreat
Not to command you from the field of war.
Then interpos'd Demophilus. O friend,
ho lead'st to conquest brave Platæa's son;

Thou too, lov'd offspring of the dearest man,
Who dost restore a brother to my eyes;
My soul your magnanimity applauds:
But, O reflect, that unabating toil
Subdues the mightiest. Valour will repine,
When the weak hand obeys the heart no more.
Yet I, declining through the weight of years,
Will not assign a measure to your strength.
If still you find your vigour undecay'd,
Stay and augment your glory. So, when time
Casts from your whiten'd heads the helm aside,
When in the temples your enfeebled arms
Have hung their consecrated shields, the land
Which gave you life, in her defence employ'd,
Shall then by honours, doubled on your age,
Bequit the gen'rous labours of your prime.
So spake the senior, and forsook the cave.
But from the fount Diomedon receives
Th' o'erflowing waters in his concave helm,
Addressing thus the genius of the stream.
Whoe'er thou art, divinity unstain'd
Of this fair fountain, till unsparing Mars
Heap'd carnage round thee, bounteous are thy streams
To me, who ill repay thee. I again
Thy silver-gleaming current must pollute,
Which, mix'd with gore, shall tinge the Malian slime.
He said, and lifted in his brimming casque
The bright, refreshing moisture. Thus repairs
The spotted panther to Hydaspes' side,
Or eastern Indus, feasted on the blood
Of some torn deer, which nigh his cruel grasp
Had roam'd unheeding in the secret shade;
Rapacious o'er the humid brink he stoops,
And in the pure and fluid crystal cools
His reeking jaws. Meantime the Thespian's eye
Roves round the vaulted space; when sudden sounds
Of music, utter'd by melodious harps,
And melting voices, distant, but in tones
By distance soften'd, while the echoes sigh'd

In lulling replication, fill the vault
With harmony. In admiration mute,
With nerves unbrac'd by rapture, he, entranc'd,
Stands like an eagle, when his parting plumes
The balm of ſleep relaxes, and his wings
Fall from his languid ſide. Platæa's chief,
Obſerving, rous'd the warrior. Son of Mars,
Shall muſic's ſoftneſs from thy boſom ſteal
The ſenſe of glory? From his neighb'ring camp
Perhaps the Perſian ſends freſh nations down.
Soon in bright ſteel Thermopylæ will blaze.
Awake. Accuſtom'd to the clang of arms,
Intent on vengeance for invaded Greece,
My ear, my ſpirit in this hour admit
No new ſenſation, nor a change of thought.
The Theſpian, ſtarting from oblivious ſloth
Of raviſhment and wonder, quick reply'd.
Theſe ſounds were more than human. Hark! Again!
O honour'd friend, no adverſe banner ſtreams
In ſight. No ſhout proclaims the Perſian freed
From his late terror. Deeper let us plunge
In this myſterious dwelling of the nymphs,
Whoſe voices charm its gloom. In ſmiles rejoin'd
Diomedon. I ſee thy ſoul enthrall'd.
Me thou would'ſt rank among th' unletter'd rout
Of yon barbarians, ſhould I preſs thy ſtay.
Time favours too. Till Agis be return'd,
We cannot act. Indulge thy eager ſearch.
Here will I wait, a centinel unmov'd,
To watch thy coming. In exploring haſte
Th' impatient Theſpian penetrates the cave.
He finds it bounded by a ſteep aſcent
Of rugged ſteps; where down the hollow rock
A modulation clear, diſtinct and ſlow
In movement ſolemn from a lyric ſtring,
Diſſolves the ſtagnant air to ſweet accord
With theſe ſonorous lays. Celeſtial maids!
While, from our cliffs contemplating the war,
We celebrate our heroes, O impart

Orphean magic to the pious ſtrain!
That from the mountain we may call the groves.
Swift motion through theſe marble fragments breathe
To overleap the high Oetæan ridge,
And cruſh the fell invaders of our peace.
The animated hero upward ſprings,
Light as a kindled vapour, which, confin'd
In ſubterranean cavities, at length
Pervading, rives the ſurface to enlarge
The long-impriſon'd flame. Aſcending ſoon,
He ſees, he ſtands abaſh'd, then rev'rend kneels.
An aged temple with inſculptur'd forms
Of Jove' harmonious daughters, and a train
Of nine bright virgins, round their prieſteſs rang'd,
Who ſtood in awful majeſty, receive
His unexpected feet. The ſong is huſh'd.
The meaſur'd movement on the lyric chord
In faint vibration dies. The prieſteſs ſage,
Whoſe elevated port and aſpect roſe
To more than mortal dignity, her lyre
Conſigning graceful to attendant hands,
Looks with reproof. The looſe, uncover'd hair
Shades his inclining forehead, while a fluſh
Of modeſt crimſon dyes his youthful cheek.
Her penſive viſage ſoftens to a ſmile,
On worth ſo blooming, which ſhe thus accoſts.
I ſhould reprove thee, inadvertent youth,
Who through the ſole acceſs, by nature left
To this pure manſion, with intruding ſteps
Doſt interrupt our lays. But riſe. Thy ſword
Perhaps embelliſh'd that triumphant ſcene,
Which wak'd theſe harps to celebrating notes.
What is the impreſs on thy warlike ſhield?
A golden eagle on my ſhield I bear,
Still bending low, he anſwers. She purſues.
Art thou poſſeſſor of that glorious orb,
By me diſtinguiſh'd in the late defeat
Of Aſia, driven before thee? Speak thy name.
Who is thy ſire? Where lies thy native ſeat?

Com'ſt thou for glory to this fatal ſpot,
Or from barbarian violence to guard
A parent's age, a ſpouſe, and tender babes.
Who call thee father? Humbly he again.
I am of Theſpia, Dithyrambus nam'd,
The ſon of Harmatides. Snatch'd by fate,
He to his brother, and my ſecond ſire,
Demophilus, conſign'd me. Theſpia's ſons
By him are led. His dictates I obey,
Him to reſemble ſtrive. No infant voice
Calls me a father. To the nuptial vow
I am a ſtranger, and among the Greeks
The leaſt entitled to thy partial praiſe.
None more entitled, interpos'd the dame.
Deſerving hero, thy demeanour ſpeaks,
It juſtifies the fame, ſo widely ſpread,
Of Harmatides' heir. O grace and pride
Of that fair city, which the muſes love,
Thee an acceptant viſitant I hail
In this their ancient temple. Thou ſhalt view
Their ſacred haunts. Deſcending from the dome,
She thus purſues. Firſt known, my youthful hours
Were exercis'd in knowledge. Homer's muſe
To daily meditation won my ſoul,
With my young ſpirit mix'd undying ſparks
Of her own rapture. By a father ſage
Conducted, cities, manners, men I ſaw,
Their inſtitutes and cuſtoms. I return'd.
The voice of Locris call'd me to ſuſtain
The only function here. Now throw thy ſight
Acroſs that meadow, whoſe enliven'd blades
Wave in the breeze, and gliſten in the ſun,
Behind the hoary fane. My bleating train
Are nouriſh'd there, a ſpot of plenty ſpar'd,
From this ſurrounding wilderneſs. Remark
That fluid mirror, edg'd by ſhrubs and flow'rs,
Shrubs of my culture, flow'rs by Iris dreſs'd.
Nor paſs that ſmiling concave on the hill,
Whoſe pointed crags are ſoften'd to the ſight

By figs and grapes. She pauſes; while around
His eye, delighted, roves in more delight
Soon to the ſpot returning, where ſhe ſtood
A deity in ſemblance, o'er the place
Preſiding awful, as Minerva wiſe,
Auguſt like Juno, like Diana pure,
But not more pure than fair. The beauteous lake
The pines wide-branching, falls of water clear,
The multifarious glow on Flora's lap
Loſe all attraction, as her gracious lips
Reſume their tale. In ſolitude remote
Here I have dwelt contemplative, ſerene,
Oft through the rocks reſponſive to my lyre,
Oft to th' Amphictyons in aſſembly full,
When at his ſhrine their annual vows they pay,
In meaſur'd declamation I repeat
The praiſe of Greece, her liberty and laws.
From me the hinds, who tend their wand'ring goats
In theſe rude purlieus, modulate their pipes
To ſmoother cadence. Juſtice from my tongue
Diſſentions calms, which e'en in deſerts rend
Th' unquiet heart of man. Now furious war
My careful thoughts engages, which delight
To help the free, th' oppreſſor to confound.
Thy feet auſpicious fortune hither brings.
In thee a noble meſſenger I find.
Go, in theſe words Leonidas addreſs.
" Meliſſa, prieſteſs of the tuneful nine,
" By their beheſts invites thy honour'd feet
" To her divine abode. Thee, firſt of Greeks,
" To conference of high import ſhe calls."
Th' obedient Theſpian down the holy cave
Returns. His ſwiftneſs ſuddenly prevents
His friend's impatience, who ſalutes him thus.
Let thy adventure be hereafter told.
Look yonder. Freſh battalions from the camp
File through the Phocian barrier to conſtruct
Another phalanx, moving tow'r of war,
Which ſcorns the ſtrength of Aſia. Let us arm;

That, ready ſtation'd in the glorious van,
We may ſecure permiſſion from the king
There to continue, and renew the fight.
That inſtant brings Megiſtias near the grot.
To Sparta's phalanx his paternal hand
Was leading Menalippus. Not unheard
By Dithyrambus in their ſlow approach,
The father warns a young and lib'ral mind.
Sprung from a diſtant boundary of Greece,
A foreigner in Sparta, cheriſh'd there,
Inſtructed, honour'd, nor unworthy held
To fight for Lacedemon in her line
Of diſcipline and valour, lo! my ſon,
The hour is come to prove thy gen'rous heart:
That in thy hand, not ill-intruſted, ſhine
The ſpear and buckler to maintain the cauſe
Of thy protectreſs. Let thy mind recal
Leonidas. On yonder bulwark plac'd,
He overlooks the battle; he diſcerns
The bold and fearful. May the gods I ſerve
Grant me to hear Leonidas approve
My ſon! No other boon my age implores.
The augur paus'd. The animated cheek
Of Menalippus glows. His eager look
Demands the fight. This ſtruck the tender ſire,
Who then with moiſten'd eyes. Remember too,
A father ſees thy danger. O! my child,
To me thy honour, as to thee is dear;
Yet court not death. By ev'ry filial tie,
By all my fondneſs, all my cares I ſue!
Amid the conflict, or the warm purſuit,
Still by the wiſe Dieneces abide.
His prudent valour knows th' unerring paths
Of glory. He admits thee to his ſide.
He will direct thy ardour. Go——They part.
Megiſtias, turning, is accoſted thus
By Dithyrambus. Venerable ſeer,
So may that ſon, whoſe merit I eſteem,
Whoſe precious head in peril I would die

To guard, return in triumph to thy breaſt,
As thou deliver'ſt to Laconia's king
A high and ſolemn meſſage. While anew
The line is forming, from th' embattled field
I muſt not ſtray, uncall'd. A ſacred charge
Through hallow'd lips will beſt approach the king.
The Acarnanian in ſuſpenſe remains
And ſilence. Dithyrambus quick relates
Meliſſa's words, deſcribes the holy grot,
Then quits th' inſtructed augur, and attends
Diomedon's loud call. That fervid chief
Was reaſſuming his diſtinguiſh'd arms,
Which, as a ſplendid recompenſe, he bore
From grateful Athens, for achievements bold;
When he with brave Miltiades redeem'd
Her domes from Aſian flames. The ſculptur'd helm
Enclos'd his manly temples. From on high
A four-fold plumage nodded; while beneath
A golden dragon with effulgent ſcales,
Itſelf the creſt, ſhot terror. On his arm
He brac'd his buckler. Bord'ring on the rim,
Gorgonian ſerpents twin'd. Within, the form
Of Pallas, martial goddeſs, was emboſs'd.
Low, as her feet, the graceful tunic flow'd.
Betwixt two griffins on her helmet ſat
A ſphynx with wings expanded; while the face
Of dire Meduſa on her breaſt-plate frown'd.
One hand ſupports a javelin, which confounds
The pride of kings. The other leads along
A blooming virgin, Victory, whoſe brow
A wreath encircles. Laurels ſhe preſents;
But from her ſhoulders all her plumes were ſhorn,
In favour'd Athens ever now to reſt.
This dread of Aſia on his mighty arm
Diomedon uprear'd. He ſnatch'd his lance,
Then ſpake to Dithyrambus. See, my friend,
Alone of all the Grecians, who ſuſtain'd
The former onſet, inexhauſted ſtand
Platæa's ſons. They well may keep the field,

Who with unſlacken'd nerves endur'd that day,
Which ſaw ten myriads of Barbarians driv'n
Back to their ſhips, and Athens left ſecure.
Charge in our line. Amid the foremoſt rank
Thy valour ſhall be plac'd to ſhare command,
And ev'ry honour with Platæa's chief.
He ſaid no more, but tow'rds the Grecian van
Impetuous, ardent ſtrode. Nor ſlow behind
The pride of Theſpia, Dithyrambus mov'd
Like youthful Hermes in celeſtial arms,
When lightly graceful with his feather'd feet
Along Scamander's flow'ry verge he paſs'd
To aid th' incens'd divinities of Greece
Againſt the Phrygian tow'rs. Their eager haſte
Soon brings the heroes to th' embattling ranks,
Whom thus the brave Diomedon exhorts.
Not to contend, but vanquiſh, are ye come.
Here in the blood of fugitives your ſpears
Shall, unoppos'd, be ſtain'd. My valiant friends,
But chief, ye men of Sparta, view that ſpace,
Where from the Malian gulf more diſtant riſe
Th' Oetæan rocks, and leſs confine the ſtreights.
There if we range, extending our wide front,
An ampler ſcope to havoc will be giv'n.
To him Dieneces. Platæan friend,
Well doſt thou counſel. On that widening ground
Cloſe to the mountain place thy vet'ran files.
Proportion'd numbers from thy right ſhall ſtretch
Quite to the ſhore in phalanx deep like thine.
The Spartans wedg'd in this contracted part
Will I contain. Behind me Alpheus waits
With lighter bodies. Further back the line
Of Locris forms a ſtrong reſerve. He ſaid.
The diff'rent bands, confiding in his ſkill,
Move on ſucceſſive. The Platæans firſt
Againſt the hill are ſtation'd. In their van
Dithyrambus rank'd. Triumphant joy
Diſtends their boſoms, ſparkles in their eyes.
Bleſs'd be the great Diomedon, they ſhout,

Who brings another hero to our line.
Hail! Dithyrambus. Hail! illuſtrious youth.
Had tender age permitted, thou hadſt gain'd
An early palm at Marathon. His poſt
He takes. His gladneſs bluſhes on his cheek
Amid the foremoſt rank. Around him crowd
The long-try'd warriors. Their unnumber'd ſcars
Diſcovering, they in ample phraſe recount
Their various dangers. He their wounds ſurveys
In veneration, nor diſdains to hear
The oft-repeated tale. From Sparta's king
Return'd, the gracious Agis theſe addreſs'd.
Leonidas ſalutes Platæa's chief,
And Dithyrambus. To your ſwords he grants
A further effort with Platæa's band,
If yet by toil unconquer'd——but I ſee;
That all, unyielding, court the promis'd fight.
Hail! glorious veterans. This ſignal day
May your victorious arms augment the wreaths
Arounnd your venerable heads, and grace
Thermopylæ with Marathonian fame.
This ſaid, he haſtens back. Meantime advance
The Mantinean, Diophantus brave,
Then Hegeſander, Tegea's dauntleſs chief,
Who near Diomedon in equal range
Erect their ſtandards. Next the Thebans form
Alcmæon, bold Eupalamus ſucceed.
With their Corinthian and Phliaſian bands.
Laſt on the Malian ſhore Mycenæa's youth
Ariſtobulus draws. From Oeta's ſide
Down to the bay in well-connected length
Each gleaming rank contains a hundred ſpears,
While twenty bucklers ev'ry rank condenſe.
A ſure ſupport, Dieneces behind
Arrays the Spartans. Godlike Agis here,
There Menalippus by their leader ſtand
Two bulwarks. Breathing ardour in the rear,
The words of Alpheus fan the growing flame
Of Expectation through his light arm'd force;

While Polydorus, preſent in his thoughts,
To vengeance ſharpens his indignant ſoul.
No foe is ſeen. No diſtant ſhout is heard.
This pauſe of action Dithyrambus choſe.
The ſolemn ſcene on Oeta to his friend
He open'd large; pourtray'd Meliſſa's form,
Reveal'd her mandate; when Platæa's chief.
Such elevation of a female mind
Beſpeaks Meliſſa worthy to obtain
The conference ſhe aſks. This wond'rous dame
Amid her hymns conceives ſome lofty thought
To make theſe ſlaves, who loiter in their camp,
Dread e'en our women. But, my gentle friend,
Say, Dithyrambus, whom the liquid ſpell
Of ſong enchants, ſhould I reproach the gods,
Who form'd me cold to muſic's pleaſing pow'r,
Or ſhould I thank them, that the ſoft'ning charm
Of ſound or numbers ne'er diſſolv'd my ſoul!
Yet I confeſs, thy valour breaks that charm,
Which may enrapture, not unman thy breaſt.
To whom his friend, Doth he, whoſe lays record
The woes of Priam, and the Grecian fame,
Doth he diſſolve thy ſpirit? Yet he flows
In all the ſweetneſs harmony can breathe.
No, by the gods, Diomedon rejoins.
I feel that mighty muſe. I ſee the car
Of fierce Achilles, ſee th' encumber'd wheels
O'er heroes driv'n, and clotted with their gore.
Another too demands my ſoul's eſteem,
Brave Æſchylus of Athens. I have ſeen
His muſe begirt by furies, while ſhe ſwell'd
Her tragic numbers. Him in equal rage
His country's foes o'erwhelming I beheld
At Marathon. If Phœbus would diffuſe
Such fire through ev'ry bard, the tuneful band
Might in themſelves find heroes for their ſongs.
But, ſon of Harmatides, lift thine eye
To yonder point, remoteſt in the bay.
Thoſe ſeeming clouds, which o'er the billows fleet

Succeſſive round the jutting land, are ſails,
Th' Athenian pendant haſtens to ſalute
Leonidas. O Æſchylus, my friend,
Firſt in the train of Phœbus and of Mars,
Be thou on board! Swift bounding o'er the waves,
Come, and be witneſs to heroic deeds!
Brace thy ſtrong harp with loftier ſounding chords
To celebrate this battle! Fall who may;
But if they fall with honour, let their names
Round feſtive goblets in thy numbers ring,
And joy, not grief, accompany the ſong.
Converſing thus, their courage they beguil'd,
Which elſe impatient of inactive hours
At long-ſuſpended glory had repin'd.

BOOK VII.

The Argument.

MEGISTIAS delivers Melissa's message to Leonidas. Medon her brother conducts him to the temple. She furnishes Leonidas with the means of executing a design he had premeditated to annoy the enemy. They are joined by a body of mariners under the command of Æschylus, a celebrated poet and warrior among the Athenians. Leonidas takes the necessary measures; and, observing from a summit of Oeta the motions of the Persian army, expects another attack: this is renewed with great violence by Hyperanthes, Abrocomes, and the principal Persian leaders, at the head of some chosen troops.

MEGISTIAS, urging to unwonted speed
His aged steps, by Dithyrambus charg'd
With sage Melissa's words, had now rejoin'd
The king of Lacedemon. At his side
Was Maron posted, watchful to receive
His high injunction. In the rear they stood
Behind two thousand Locrians, deep-array'd
By warlike Medon, from Oileus sprung.
Leonidas to them his anxious mind
Was thus disclosing. Medon, Maron, hear.
From this low rampart my exploring eye
But half commands the action, yet hath mark'd
Enough for caution. Yon barbarian camp,
Immense, exhaustless, deluging the ground
With myriads, still o'erflowing, may consume
By endless numbers, and unceasing toil
The Grecian strength. Not marble his our flesh,
Nor adamant our sinews. Sylvan pow'rs,
Who dwell on Oeta, your superior aid
We must solicit. Your stupendous cliffs
In those loose rocks, and branchless trunks contain
More fell annoyance than the arm of man.
He ended, when Megistias. Virtuous king,
Melissa, priestess of the tuneful nine,
By their behests invites thy honour'd feet
To her chaste dwelling, seated on that hill.
To conference of high import she calls
Thee, first of Grecians. Medon interpos'd.
She his my sister. Justice rules her ways

With piety and wiſdom. To her voice
The nations round give ear. The muſes breathe
Their inſpiration through her ſpotleſs ſoul,
Which borders of divinity. She calls
On thee. O truly ſtyl'd the firſt of Greeks,
Regard her call. Yon cliff's projecting head
To thy diſcernment will afford a ſcope
More full, more certain; thence thy ſkilful eye
Will beſt direct the fight. Meliſſa's ſire
Was ever preſent to the king in thought,
Who thus to Medon. Lead, Oïleus' ſon.
Before the daughter of Oïleus place
My willing feet. They haſten to the cave.
Megiſtias, Maron follow. Through the rock
Leonidas, aſcending to the fane,
Roſe like the god of morning from the cell
Of night, when, ſhedding cheerfulneſs and day
On hill and vale emblaz'd with dewy gems,
He gladdens nature. Lacedemon's king,
Majeſtically graceful and ſerene,
Diſpels the rigour in that ſolemn ſeat
Of holy ſequeſtration. On the face
Of penſive-ey'd religion rapture glows
In admiration of the godlike man.
Advanc'd Meliſſa. He her proffer'd hand
In hue, in purity like ſnow, receiv'd.
A heav'n-illumin'd dignity of look
On him ſhe fix'd. Rever'd by all, ſhe ſpake.
Hail! chief of men, ſelected by the gods
For purer fame than Hercules acquir'd.
This hour allows no pauſe. She leads the king
With Medon, Maron, and Megiſtias, down
A ſlope, declining to the moſſy verge,
Which terminates the mountain. While they paſs,
She thus proceeds. Theſe marble maſſes view,
Which lie diſpers'd around you. They were hewn
From yonder quarry. Note thoſe pond'rous beams,
The ſylvan offspring of that hill. With theſe
At my requeſt th' Amphictyons from their ſeat

Of gen'ral council piouſly decreed
To raiſe a dome, the ornament of Greece.
Obſerve thoſe wither'd firs, thoſe mould'ring oaks,
Down that declivity, half-rooted, bent,
Inviting human force---Then look below.
There lies Thermopylæ. I ſee, exclaims
The high-conceiving hero. I recal
Thy father's words and forecaſt. He preſag'd,
I ſhould not find his daughter's council vain.
He to accompliſh what thy wiſdom plans,
Hath ampleſt means ſupply'd. Go, Medon, bring
The thouſand peaſants from th' Oïlean vale
Detach'd. Their leader Melibœus bring.
Fly, Maron. Ev'ry inſtrument provide
To fell the trees, to drag the maſſy beams,
To lift the broad-hewn fragments. Are not theſe
For ſacred uſe reſerv'd, Megiſtias ſaid?
Can theſe be yielded by the hand of Mars
Without pollution? In a ſolemn tone
The prieſteſs anſwer'd. Rev'rend man, who bear'ſt
Pontific wreaths, and thou, great captain, hear.
Forbear to think that my unprompted mind,
Calm and ſequeſter'd in religion's peace,
Could have devis'd a ſtratagem of war,
Or, unpermitted, could reſign to Mars
Theſe rich materials, gather'd to reſtore
In ſtrength and ſplendour yon decrepid walls,
And that time-ſhaken roof. Rejecting ſleep,
Laſt night I lay, contriving ſwift revenge
On theſe barbarians, whoſe career profane
O'erturns the Grecian temples, and devotes
Their holy bow'rs to flames. I left my couch,
Long ere the ſun his orient gates unbarr'd.
Beneath yon beach my penſive head reclin'd,
The rivulets, the fountains, warbling round,
Attracted ſlumber. In a dream I ſaw
Calliope. Her ſiſters, all with harps,
Were rang'd around her as their Parian forms
Show in the temple. Doſt thou ſleep, ſhe ſaid?

Meliſſa, doſt thou ſleep? The barb'rous hoſt
Approaches Greece. The firſt of Grecians comes
By death to vanquiſh. Prieſteſs, let him hurl
Theſe marble heaps, theſe conſecrated beams,
Our fane itſelf, to cruſh the impious ranks.
The hero ſummon to our ſacred hill.
Reveal the promis'd ſuccour. All is due
To liberty againſt a tyrant's pride.
She ſtruck her ſhell. In concert full reply'd
The ſiſter lyres. Leonidas they ſung
In ev'ry note and dialect yet known,
In meaſures new, in language yet to come.
She finiſh'd. Then Megiſtias. Dear to heav'n,
By nations honour'd, and in tow'ring thought
O'er either ſex pre-eminent, thy words
To me a ſoldier and a prieſt ſuffice.
I heſitate no longer. But the king,
Wrapt in ecſtatic contemplation, ſtood,
Revolving deep an anſwer, which might ſuit
His dignity and hers. At length he ſpake.
Not Lacedemon's whole collected ſtate
Of ſenate, people, ephori, and kings;
Not the Amphictyons, whoſe convention holds
The univerſal majeſty of Greece,
E'er drew ſuch rev'rence, as thy ſingle form,
O all-ſurpaſſing woman, worthy child
Of time renown'd Oïleus. In thy voice
I hear the goddeſs, Liberty. I ſee
In thy ſublimity of look and port
That daughter bright of Eleutherian Jove.
Me thou haſt prais'd. My conſcious ſpirit feels,
That not to triumph in thy virtuous praiſe
Were want of virtue. Yet, illuſtrious dame,
Were I aſſur'd, that oracles delude;
That, unavailing, I ſhould ſpill my blood;
That all the muſes of ſubjected Greece
Hereafter would be ſilent, and my name
Be ne'er tranſmitted to recording time;
There is in virtue, for her ſake alone,

What should uphold my resolution firm.
My country's laws I never would survive.
Mov'd at his words, reflecting on his fate,
She had relax'd her dignity of mind,
Had sunk in sadness; but her brothers helm
Before her beams. Relumining her night
He through the cave like Hesperus ascends,
Th' Oïlean hinds conducting to achieve
The enterprise, she counsels. Now her ear
Is pierc'd by notes, shrill sounding from the vault.
Up starts a diff'rent band, alert and light,
Athenian sailors. Long and sep'rate files
Of lusty shoulders, eas'd by union, bear
Thick, well-compacted cables, wont to heave
The restiff anchor. To a naval pipe,
As if one soul invigorated all,
And all compos'd one body, they had trod
In equal paces, mazy, yet unbroke,
Throughout their passage. So the spinal strength
Of some portentous serpent, whom the heats
Of Lybia breed, indissolubly knit,
But flexible, a cross the sandy plain,
Or up the mountain, draws his spotted length,
Or where a winding excavation leads
Through rocks abrupt and wild. Of stature large,
In arms, which show'd simplicity of strength,
No decoration of redundant art,
With sable horse-hair, floating down his back,
A warrior moves behind. Compos'd in gait,
Austerely grave and thoughtful, on his shield
The democratic majesty he bore
Of Athens. Carv'd in emblematic brass,
Her image stood, with Pallas by her side,
And trampled under each victorious foot
A regal crown, one Persian, one usurp'd
By her own tyrants on the well-fought plain
Of Marathon confounded. He commands
These future guardians of their country's weal,
Of gen'ral Greece the bulwarks. Their high deeds

From Artemisium, from th' empurpled shores
Of Salamis renown shall echo wide;
Shall tell posterity, in latest times,
That naval fortitude controls the world.
Swift Maron, following, brings a vig'rous band
Of Helots. Ev'ry instrument they wield
To delve, to hew, to heave; and active last
Bounds Melibœus, vigilant to urge
The tardy forward. To Laconia's king
Advanc'd th' Athenian leader, and began:
  Thou godlike ruler of Eurotas hail!
Thee, by my voice, Themistocles salutes,
The admiral of Athens. I conduct
By public choice the squadron of my tribe,
And Æschylus am call'd. Our chief hath giv'n
Three days to glory on Eubœa's coast,
Whose promontories almost rise to meet
Thy ken from Oeta's cliffs. This morning saw
The worsted foe, from Artemisium driv'n,
Leave their disabled ships, and floating wrecks
For Grecian trophies. When the fight was clos'd,
I was detach'd to bring th' auspicious news,
To bid thee welcome. Fortunate my keel
Hath swiftly borne me. Joyful I concur
In thy attempt. Appris'd by yonder chiefs,
Who met me landing, instant from the ships
A thousand gallant mariners I drew,
Who till the setting sun shall lend their toil.
  Themistocles and thou accept my heart,
Leonidas reply'd, and closely strain'd
The brave, the learn'd Athenian to his breast.
To envy is ignoble, to admire
Th' activity of Athens will become
A king of Sparta, who like thee condemn'd
His country's sloth. But Sparta now is arm'd.
Thou shalt commend. Behold me station'd here
To watch the wild vicissitudes of war,
Direct the course of slaughter. To this post
By that superior woman I was call'd,

By long protracted fight left fainting Greece
Should yield, outnumber'd, my enlighten'd soul
Through her, whom heav'n enlightens, hath devis'd
To whelm the num'rous, persevering foe
In hideous death, and signalize the day
With horrors new to war. The muses prompt
The bright achievement. Lo! from Athens smiles
Minerva too. Her swift auspicious aid
In thee we find, and these, an ancient race,
By her and Neptune cherish'd. Straight he meets
The gallant train, majestic with his arms
Outstretch'd, in this applauding strain he spake:
O lib'ral people, earliest arm'd to shield
Not your own Athens more, than gen'ral Greece,
You best deserve her gratitude. Her praise
Will rank you foremost on the rolls of fame.
They hear, they gaze, revering and rever'd.
Fresh numbers muster, rushing from the hills,
The thickets round. Melissa, pointing, spake:
I am their leader. Native of the hills
Are these, the rural worshippers of Pan,
Who breaths an ardour through their humble minds
To join your warriors. Vassals these not mine,
But of the muses, and their hallow'd laws,
Administer'd by me. Their patient hands
Make culture smile, where nature seems to chide
Nor wanting my instructions, or my pray'rs,
Fertility they scatter by their toil
Around this aged temple's wild domain.
Is Meliboeus here! Thou fence secure
To old Oïleus from the cares of time,
Thrice art thou welcome. Useful, wise, belov'd,
Where'er thou sojourneſt, on Oeta known,
As oft the bounty of a father's love
Thou on Melissa's solitude dost pour,
Be thou director of these mountain hinds.
Th' important labour to inspiring airs
From flutes and harps in symphony with hymns
Of holy virgins, ardent all perform,

In bands divided under diff'rent chiefs.
Huge timbers, blocks of marble to remove
They firſt attempted; then aſſembled ſtones
Looſe in their beds, and wither'd trunks, uptorn
By tempeſts, next diſmember'd from the rock
Broad, rugged fragments; from the mountains hew'd
Their venerable firs, and aged oaks,
Which, of their branches by the lightning bar'd,
Preſented ſtill againſt the blaſting flame
The hoary pride unſhaken. Theſe the Greeks,
But chief th' Athenian mariners, to force
Uniting ſkill, with maſſy levers heave.
With ſtrong-knit cables drag: till now diſpos'd
Where great Leonidas appoints, the piles
Nod o'er the Streights. This new and ſudden ſcene
Might lift imagination to belief
That Orpheus and Amphion from their beds
Of ever blooming aſphodel had heard
The muſes call; had brought their fabled harps,
At whoſe mellifluent charm once more the trees
Had burſt their fibrous bands, and marbles leap'd
In rapid motion from the quarry's womb,
That day to follow harmony in aid
Of gen'rous valour. Fancy might diſcern
Cerulean Tethys, from her coral grot
Emerging, ſeated on her pearly car,
With Nereids, floating on the ſurge below,
To view in wonder from the Malian bay
The attic ſons of Neptune; who forſook
Their wooden walls to range th' Oetæan crags,
To rend the foreſts, and disjoin the rocks.
Meantime a hundred ſheep are ſlain. Their limbs
From burning piles fume grateful. Bounty ſpreads
A decent board. Simplicity attends.
Then ſpake the prieſteſs. Long enduring chiefs,
Your efforts, now accompliſh'd, may admit
Reflection due to this hard labour'd train,
Due to yourſelves. Her hoſpitable ſmile
Wins her well-choſen gueſts, Laconia's king,

Her brother, Maron, Æschylus divine
With Acarnania's priest. Her first commands
To Melibœus sedulous and blithe
Distribute plenty through the toiling crowd.
Then, skreen'd beneath close umbrage of an oak,
Each care-divested chief the banquet shares.
Cool breezes, whisp'ring, flutter in the leaves
Whose verdure, pendent in an arch, repel
The west'ring sun's hot glare. Favonius bland
His breath impregnates with exhaling sweets
From flow'ry beds, whose scented clusters deck
The gleaming pool in view. Fast by, a brook
In limpid lampses over native steps
Attunes his cadence to sonorous strings,
And liquid accents of Melissa's maids.
The floating air in melody respires.
A rapture mingles in the calm repast.
Uprises Æschylus. A goblet full
He grasps. To those divinities, who dwell
In yonder temple, this libation first,
To thee benignant hostess, next I pour,
Then to thy fame, Leonidas. He said.
His breast, with growing heat distended, prompts
His eager hand, to whose expressive sign
One of the virgins cedes her sacred lyre.
Their choral song complacency restrains
The soul of music, bursting from his touch,
At once gives birth to sentiment sublime.
O Hercules, and Perseus, he began,
Star-spangled twins of Leda, and the rest
Of Jove's immediate seed, your splendid acts
Mankind protected, while the race was rude;
While o'er the earth's uncivilized extent
The savage monster, and the ruffian sway'd,
More savage still. No policy, nor laws
Had fram'd societies. By single strength
A single ruffian, or a monster fell.
The legislator rose. Three lights in Greece,
Lycurgus, Solon and Zaleucus blaz'd.
Then, substituting wisdom, Jove profuse

Of his own blood no longer, gave us more
In diſcipline and manners, which can form
A hero like Leonidas, than all
The god-begotten progeny before.
The pupils next of Solon claim the muſe.
Sound your hoarſe conchs, ye Tritons. You beheld
The Atlantean ſhape of Slaughter wade
Through your aſtoniſh'd deeps, his purple arm
Uplifting high before th' Athenian line.
You ſaw bright Conqueſt, riding on the gale,
Which ſwell'd their ſails; ſaw Terror at their helms
To guide their brazen beaks on Aſia's pride.
Her adamantine grapple from their decks
Fate threw, and Ruin on the hoſtile fleet
Inextricably faſten'd. Sound, ye nymphs
Of Oeta's mountains, of her woods and ſtreams,
Who hourly witneſs to Meliſſa's worth,
Ye oreads, dryads, naiads, ſound her praiſe.
Proclaim Zaleucus by his daughter grac'd,
Like Solon and Lycurgus by their ſons.
  Laconia's hero, and the prieſteſs bow'd
Their foreheads grateful to the bard ſublime.
She, riſing, takes the word. More ſweet thy lyre
To friendſhip's ear, than terrible to foes
Thy ſpear in battle, though the keeneſt point
Which ever pierc'd Barbarians. Cloſe we here
The ſong and banquet. Hark! a diſtant din
From Aſia's camp requires immediate care.
  She leads. Along the rocky verge they paſs.
In calm delight Leonidas ſurveys
All in the order which he laſt aſſign'd;
As o'er Thermopylæ beneath he caſt
A wary look. The mountain's furtheſt crag
Now reach'd, Meliſſa to the king began:
  Obſerve that ſpace below, diſpers'd in dales,
In hollows, winding through diſſever'd rocks,
The ſlender outlet, ſkreen'd by yonder ſhrubs,
Leads to the paſs. There ſtately to my view

The martial queen of Caria yeſter ſun,
Deſcending, ſhow'd. Her loudly I reprov'd.
But ſhe, devoted to the Perſian king,
In ambuſh there preſerv'd his flying hoſt.
She laſt retreated; but, retreating, prov'd
Her valour equal to a better cauſe.
Again I ſee the heroine approach.
Megiſtias then. I ſee a powerful arm,
Suſtaining firm the large, emblazon'd ſhield,
Which, faſhion'd firſt in Caria, we have learn'd
To imitate in Greece. Sublime her port
Beſpeaks a mighty ſpirit. Prieſteſs, look.
An act of piety ſhe now performs,
Directing thoſe, perhaps her Carian band,
To bear dead brethren from the bloody field,
Among the horſemen an exalted form
Like Demaratus ſtrikes my ſearching eye.
To me, recalling his tranſcendent rank,
In Sparta once, he ſeems a languid ſun,
Which dimly ſinks in exhalations dark,
Enveloping his radiance. While he ſpake,
Intent on martial duty Medon views
The dang'rous thicket; Lacedemon's chief,
Around the region his conſid'rate eye
Extending, marks each movement of the foe.
Th' imperial Perſian from his lofty car
Had in the morning's early conflict ſeen
His vanquiſh'd army, pouring from the ſtreights
Back to their tents, and o'er his camp diſpers'd
In conſternation; as a river burſts
Impetuous from his fountain, then, enlarg'd,
Spreads a dead ſurface o'er ſome level marſh.
Th' aſtoniſh'd king thrice ſtarted from his ſeat;
Shame, fear, and indignation rent his breaſt;
As ruin irreſiſtible were near
To overwhelm his millions. Haſte, he call'd
To Hyperanthes, haſte and meet the Greeks.
Their daring rage, their inſolence repel.
From ſuch diſhonour vindicate our name.

His royal brother through th' extenſive camp
Obedient mov'd. Deliberate and brave,
Each active prince from ev'ry tent remote,
The hardieſt troops he ſummon'd. Caria's queen,
To Hyperanthes bound by firm eſteem
Of worth, unrivall'd in the Perſian court,
In ſolemn pace was now returning ſlow
Before a band, tranſporting from the field
Their ſlain companions to the ſandy beach.
She ſtopp'd, and thus addreſs'd him. rn, O
prince, Lea
From one, whoſe wiſhes on thy merit wait,
The only means to bind thy gallant brow
In faireſt wreathes. To break the Grecian line
In vain ye ſtruggle, unarray'd and lax,
Depriv'd of union. Try to form one band
In order'd ranks, and emulate the foe.
Nor to ſecure a thicket next the paſs
Forget. Selected numbers ſtation there.
Farewel, young hero. May thy fortune prove
Unlike to mine. Had Aſia's millions ſpar'd
One myriad to ſuſtain me, none had ſeen
Me quit the dang'rous conteſt. But the head
Of baſe Argeſtes on ſome future day
Shall feel my treaſur'd vengeance. From the fleet
I only ſtay, till burial rites are paid
To theſe dead Carians. On this fatal ſtrand
May Artemiſia's grief appeaſe your ghoſts.
My faithful ſubjects, ſacrific'd in vain.
The hero grateful and reſpectful heard,
What ſoon his warmth neglected at the ſight
Of ſpears, which flam'd innumerable round.
Beyond the reſt in luſtre was a band,
The ſatellites of Xerxes. They forſook
Their conſtant orbit round th' imperial throne
At this dread criſis. To a myriad fix'd,
From their unchanging number they deriv'd
The title of Immortals. Light their ſpears;
Set in pomegranats of refulgent gold,

Or burnish'd silver, were the slender blades.
Magnificent and stately were the ranks.
The prince, commanding mute attention, spake.
In two divisions part your number, chiefs.
One will I lead to onset. In my ranks
Abrocomes, Hydarnes shall advance,
Pandates, Mindus, Intaphernes brave,
To wrest this short-liv'd victory from Greece.
Thou, Abradates, by Sosarmes join'd,
Orontes and Mazæus, keep the rest
From action. Future succour they must lend,
Should envious fate exhaust our num'rous files.
For, O pure Mithra, may thy radiant eye
Ne'er see us, yielding to ignoble flight,
The Persian name dishonour. May the acts
Of our renown'd progenitors, who, led
By Cyrus, gave one monarch to the east,
In us revive. O think, ye Persian lords,
What endless infamy will blast your names;
Should Greece, that narrow portion of the earth,
Your pow'r defy: when Babylon hath low'r'd
Her tow'ring crest, when Lydia's pride is quell'd
In Crœsus vanquish'd, when her empire lost
Ecbatana deplores. Ye chosen guard,
Your king's immortal bulwark, O reflect,
What deeds from your superior swords he claims.
You share his largest bounty. To your faith,
Your constancy and prowess he commits
His throne, his person, and this day his fame.
They wave their banners, blazing in the sun,
Who then three hours tow'rd Hesperus had driv'n
From his meridian height. Amid their shouts
The hoarse-resounding billows are not heard.
Of diff'rent nations, and in diff'rent garb,
Innumerous and vary'd like the shells,
By restless Tethys scatter'd on the beach,
O'er which they trod, the multitude advanc'd,
Straight by Leonidas descry'd. The van
Abrocomes and Hyperanthes led,

Pandates, Mindus. Violent their march
Sweeps down the rocky, hollow-ſounding paſs.
So, where th' unequal globe in mountains ſwells,
A torrent rolls his thund'ring ſurge between
The ſteep-erected cliffs; tumultuous daſh
The waters, burſting on the pointed crags:
The valley roars; the marble channel foams.
Th' undaunted Greeks immoveably withſtand
The dire encounter. Soon th' impetuous ſhock
Of thouſands and of myriads ſhakes the ground.
Stupendous ſcene of terror! Under hills,
Whoſe ſides, half-arching, o'er the hoſts project,
The unabating fortitude of Greece
Maintains her line, th' untrain'd Barbarians charge
In ſavage fury. With inverted trunks,
Or bent obliquely from the ſhagged ridge,
The ſilvan horrors overſhade the fight.
The clanging trump, the craſh of mingled ſpears,
The groan of death, and War's diſcordant ſhouts
Alarm the Echoes in their neighb'ring caves;
Woods, cliffs, and ſhores return the dreadful ſound.

BOOK VIII.

The Argument.

HYPERANTHES diſcontinuing the fight, while he waits for reinforcements, Teribazus, a Perſian remarkable for his merit and learning, and highly beloved by Hyperanthes, but unhappy in his paſſion for Ariana, a daughter of Darius, advances from the reſt of the army to the reſcue of a friend in diſtreſs, who lay wounded on the field of battle. Teribazus is attacked by Diophantus, the Mantinean, whom he overcomes; then engaging with Dithyrambus, is himſelf ſlain. Hyperanthes haſtens to his ſuccour. A general battle enſues, where Diomedon diſtinguiſhes his valour. Hyperanthes and Abrocomes, partly by their own efforts, and partly by the perfidy of the Thebans, who deſert the line, being on the point of forcing the Grecians, are repulſed by the Lacedemonians. Hyperanthes compoſes a ſelect body out of the Perſian ſtanding forces, and, making an improvement in their diſcipline, renews the attack; upon which Leonidas changes the diſpoſition of his army. Hyperanthes and the ableſt Perſian generals are driven out of the field, and ſeveral thouſands of the Barbarians, circumvented in the paſs, are entirely deſtroyed.

AMID the van of Perſia was a youth,
Nam'd Teribazus, not for golden ſtores,
Not for wide paſtures, travers'd o'er by herds,
By fleece-abounding ſheep, or gen'rous ſteeds,
Nor yet for pow'r, nor ſplendid honours fam'd.
Rich was his mind in ev'ry art divine;
Through ev'ry path of ſcience had he walk'd,
The votary of wiſdom. In the years,
When tender down inveſts the ruddy cheek,
He with the Magi turn'd the hollow'd page
Of Zoroaſtres. Then his tow'ring thoughts
High on the plumes of contemplation ſoar'd.
He from the lofty Babylonian ſtane
With learn'd Chaldæans trac'd the heav'nly ſphere,
There number'd o'er the vivid fires, which gleam
On Night's beſpangled boſom. Nor unheard
Were Indian ſages from ſequeſter'd bow'rs,
While on the banks of Ganges they diſclos'd
The pow'rs of nature, whether in the woods,
The fruitful glebe, or flow'r, the healing plant,
The limpid waters, or the ambient air,
Or in the purer element of fire.
The realm of old Seſoſtris next he view'd,
Myſterious Egypt with her hidden rites
Of Iſis and Oſiris. Laſt he ſought
Th' Ionian Greeks, from Athens ſprung, nor paſs'd

Miletis by, which once in rapture heard
The tongue of Thales, nor Priene's walls,
Where Wisdom dwelt with Bias, nor the seat
Of Pittacus, rever'd on Lesbian shores.
Th' enlighten'd youth to Susa now return'd,
Place of his birth. His merit soon was dear
To Hyperanthes. It was now the time,
That Discontent and Murmur on the banks
Of Nile were loud and threat'ning. Chembes there
The only faithful stood, a potent lord,
Whom Xerxes held by promis'd nuptial ties
With his own blood. To this Egyptian prince
Bright Ariana was the destin'd spouse,
From the same bed with Hyperanthes born.
Among her guards was Teribazus nam'd
By that fond brother, tender of her weal.
Th' Egyptian boundaries they gain. They hear
Of insurrection, of the Pharian tribes
In arms, and Chembes in the tumult slain.
They pitch their tents, at midnight are assail'd,
Surpis'd, their leaders massacred, the slaves
Of Ariana captives borne away,
Her own pavilion forc'd, her person seiz'd
By ruffian hands: when timely to redeem
Her and th' invaded camp from further spoil
Flies Teribazus with a rally'd band,
Swift on her chariot seats the royal fair,
Nor waits the dawn. Of all her menial train
None, but three female slaves, are left. Her guide,
Her comforter and guardian fate provides
In him, distinguish'd by his worth alone,
No prince, nor satrap, now the single chief
Of her surviving guard. Of regal birth,
But with excelling graces in her soul,
Unlike an eastern princess she inclines
To his consoling, his instructive tongue
An humbled ear. Amid the converse sweet
Her charms, her mind, her virtues he explores,
Admiring. Soon is admiration chang'd

To love; nor loves he sooner than despairs.
From morn till ev'n her passing wheels he guards
Back to Euphrates. Often, as she mounts,
Or quits the car, his arm her weight sustains
With trembling pleasure. His assiduous hand
From purest fountains wafts the living flood.
Nor seldom by the fair one's soft command
Would he repose him, at her feet reclin'd;
While o'er his lips her lovely forehead bow'd,
Won by his grateful eloquence, which sooth'd
With sweet variety the tedious march,
Beguiling time. He too would then forget
His pains a while, in raptures vain entranc'd,
Delusion all, and fleeting rays of joy,
Soon overcast by more intense despair:
Like wint'ry clouds, which, op'ning for a time,
Tinge their black folds with gleams of scatter'd light,
Then, swiftly closing, on the brow of morn
Condense their horrors, and in thickest gloom
The ruddy beauty veil. They now approach
The tow'r of Belus. Hyperanthes leads
Through Babylon an army to chastise
The crime of Egypt. Teribazus here
Parts from his princess, marches bright in steel
Beneath his patron's banner, gathers palms
On conquer'd Nile. To Susa he returns,
To Ariana's residence, and bears
Deep in his heart th' immedicable wound.
But unreveal'd and silent was his pain;
Nor yet in solitary shades he roam'd,
Nor shunn'd resort: but o'er his sorrows cast
A sickly dawn of gladness, and in smiles
Conceal'd his anguish; while the secret flame
Rag'd in his bosom, and its peace consum'd:
His soul still brooding o'er these mournful thoughts.
Can I, O Wisdom, find relief in thee,
Who dost approve my passion? From the snares
Of beauty only thou wouldst guard my heart.
But here thyself art charm'd; where softness, grace,

And ev'ry virtue dignify desire.
Yet thus to love, despairing to possess,
Of all the torments, by relentless fate
On life inflicted, is the most severe.
Do I not feel thy warnings in my breast,
That flight alone can save me? I will go
Back to the learn'd Chaldæans, on the banks
Of Ganges seek the sages; where to heav'n
With thee my elevated soul shall tow'r.
O wretched Teribazus! all conspires
Against thy peace. Our mighty lord prepares
To overwhelm the Grecians. Ev'ry youth
Is call'd to war; and I, who lately pois'd
With no inglorious arm the soldier's lance,
Who near the side of Hyperanthes fought,
Must join the throng. How therefore can I fly
From Ariana, who with Asia's queens
The splendid camp of Xerxes must adorn?
Then be it so. Again I will adore
Her gentle virtues. Her delightful voice,
Her gracious sweetness shall again diffuse
Resistless magic through my ravish'd heart;
Till passion, thus with double rage inflam'd,
Swells to distraction in my tortur'd breast,
Then—but in vain through darkness do I search
My fate—Despair and Fortune be my guides.

The day arriv'd, when Xerxes first advanc'd
His arms from Susa's gates. The Persian dames,
So were accustom'd all the eastern fair,
In sumptuous cars accompany'd his march.
A beauteous train, by Ariana grac'd.
Her Teribazus follows, on her wheels
Attends and pines. Such woes oppress the youth,
Oppress, but not enervate. From the van
He in this second conflict had withstood
The threat'ning frown of adamantine Mars,
He singly, while his bravest friends recoil'd.
His manly temples no tiara bound.
The slender lance of Asia he disdain'd,

And her light target. Eminent he tow'r'd
In Grecian arms, the wonder of his foes;
Among th' Ionians were his ſtrenuous limbs
Train'd in the gymnic ſchool. A fulgent caſque
Enclos'd his head. Before his face and cheſt
Down to his knees an ample ſhield was ſpread.
A pond'rous ſpear he ſhook. The well-aim'd point
Sent two Phliaſians to the realms of death
With four Tegæans, whoſe indignant chief,
Brave Hegeſander, vengeance breath'd in vain,
With ſtreaming wounds repuls'd. Thus far unmatch'd,
His arm prevail'd; when Hyperanthes call'd
From fight his fainting legions. Now each band
Their languid courage reinforc'd by reſt.
Meantime with Teribazus thus conferr'd
Th' applauding prince. Thou much deſerving youth,
Had twenty warriors in the dang'rous van
Like thee maintain'd the onſet, Greece had wept
Her proſtrate ranks. The weary'd fight awhile
I now relax, till Abradates ſtrong,
Orontes and Mazæus are advanc'd.
Then to the conflict will I give no pauſe.
If not by proweſs, yet by endleſs toil
Succeſſive numbers ſhall exhauſt the foe.
He ſaid. Immers'd in ſadneſs, ſcarce reply'd,
But to himſelf complain'd the am'rous youth.
Still do I languiſh, mourning o'er the fame
My arm acquires. Tormented heart! thou ſeat
Of conſtant ſorrow, what deceitful ſmiles
Yet canſt thou borrow from unreal hope
To flatter life? At Ariana's feet
What if with ſupplicating knees I bow,
Implore her pity, and reveal my love.
Wretch! canſt thou climb to yon effulgent orb,
And ſhare the ſplendours which irradiate heav'n?
Doſt thou aſpire to that exalted maid,
Great Xerxes' ſiſter, rivalling the claim
Of Aſia's proudeſt potentates and kings?

Unleſs within her boſom I inſpir'd
A paſſion, fervent as my own, nay more,
Such, as diſpelling ev'ry virgin fear,
Might, unreſtrain'd, diſcloſe its fond deſire,
My love is hopeleſs; and her willing hand,
Should ſhe beſtow it, draws from Aſia's lord
On both perdition. By deſpair benumb'd,
His limbs their action loſe. A wiſh for death
O'ercaſts and chills his ſoul. When ſudden cries
From Ariamnes rouſe his drooping pow'rs.
Alike in manners, they, of equal age,
Were friends, and partners in the glorious toil
Of war. Together they victorious chas'd
The bleeding ſons of Nile, when Egypt's pride
Before the ſword of Hyperanthes fell.
That lov'd companion Teribazus views
By all abandon'd, in his gore outſtretch'd
The victor's ſpoil. His languid ſpirit ſtarts;
He ruſhes ardent from the Perſian line;
The wounded warrior in his ſtrong embrace
He bears away. By indignation ſtung,
Fierce from the Grecians Diophantus ſends
A loud defiance. Teribazus leaves
His reſcu'd friend. His maſſy ſhield he rears;
High-brandiſhing his formidable ſpear,
He turns intrepid on th' approaching foe.
Amazement follows. On he ſtrides, and ſhakes
The plumed honours of his ſhining creſt.
Th' ill-fated Greek awaits th' unequal fight,
Pierc'd in the throat, with ſounding arms he falls,
Through ev'ry file the Mantineans mourn.
Long on the ſlain the victor fix'd his ſight
With theſe reflections. By thy ſplendid arms
Thou art a Greek of no ignoble rank:
From thy ill fortune I perhaps derive
A more conſpicuous luſtre.—What if heav'n
Should add new victims, ſuch as thou, to grace
My undeſerving hand? who knows, but ſhe
Might ſmile upon my trophies. Oh! vain thought!

I see the pride of Asia's monarch swell
With vengeance fatal to her beauteous head.
Disperse, ye phantom hopes. Too long, torn heart,
Hast thou with grief contended. Lo! I plant
My foot this moment on the verge of death,
By Fame invited, by Despair impell'd
To pass th' irremeable bound. No more
Shall Teribazus backward turn his step,
But here conclude his doom. Then cease to heave
Thou troubled bosom, ev'ry thought be calm
Now at th' approach of everlasting peace.
He ended; when a mighty foe drew nigh,
Not less than Dithyrambus. Ere they join'd,
The Persian warrior to the Greek began:
Art thou th' unconquerable chief, who mow'd
Our battle down. That eagle on thy shield
Too well proclaims thee. To attempt thy force
I rashly purpos'd. That my single arm
Thou deign'st to meet, accept my thanks, and know,
The thought of conquest less employs my soul,
Than admiration of thy glorious deeds,
And that by thee I cannot fall disgrac'd.
He ceas'd. These words the Thespian youth return'd:
Of all the praises from thy gen'rous mouth,
The only portion my desert may claim,
Is this, my bold adventure to confront
Thee, yet unmatch'd. What Grecian hath not mark'd
Thy flaming steel? from Asia's boundless camp
Not one hath equall'd thy victorious might.
But whence thy armour of the Grecian form?
Whence thy tall spear, thy helmet? Whence the weight
Of that strong shield? Unlike thy eastern friends.
O if thou be'st some fugitive, who, lost
To liberty and virtue, art become
A tyrant's vile stipendiary, that arm,
That valour thus triumphant I deplore,

Which, after all their efforts and ſucceſs,
Deſerve no honour from the gods or men.
Here Teribazus in a ſigh rejoin'd.
I am to Greece a ſtranger, am a wretch
To thee unknown, who courts this hour to die,
Yet not ignobly, but in death to raiſe
My name from darkneſs, while I end my woes.
The Grecian then: I view thee, and I mourn.
A dignity, which virtue only bears,
Firm reſolution, ſeated on thy brow,
Though grief hath dimm'd thy drooping eye, demand
My veneration: and whatever be
The malice of thy fortune, what the cares,
Infeſting thus thy quiet, they create
Within my breaſt the pity of a friend.
Why then, conſtraining my reluctant hand
To act againſt thee will thy might ſupport
Th' unjuſt ambition of malignant kings,
The foes to virtue, liberty and peace?
Yet free from rage or enmity I lift
My adverſe weapon. Victory I aſk.
Thy life may fate for happier days reſerve.
This ſaid, their beaming lances they protend,
Of hoſtile hate, or fury both devoid,
As on the Iſthmian, or Olympic ſands
For fame alone contending. Either hoſt,
Pois'd on their arms, in ſilent wonder gaze.
The fight commences. Soon the Grecian ſpear,
Which all the day in conſtant battle worn,
Unnumber'd ſhields and corſelets had transfix'd,
Againſt the Perſian buckler, ſhiv'ring, breaks,
Its maſter's hand diſarming. Then began
The ſenſe of honour, and the dread of ſhame
To ſwell in Dithyrambus. Undiſmay'd,
He grappled with his foe, and inſtant ſeiz'd
His threat'ning ſpear, before th' uplifted arm
Could execute the meditated wound.
The weapon burſt between their ſtruggling graſp.

Their hold they looſen, bare their ſhining ſwords.
With equal ſwiftneſs to defend, or charge,
Each active youth advances and recedes.
On ev'ry ſide they traverſe. Now direct,
Obliquely now the wheeling blades deſcend.
Still is the conflict dubious; when the Greek,
Diſſembling, points his falchion to the ground,
His arm depreſſing, as o'ercome by toil:
While with his buckler cautious he repels
The blows, repeated by his active foe.
Greece trembles for her hero. Joy pervades
The ranks of Aſia; Hyperanthes ſtrides
Before the line, preparing to receive
His friend triumphant: while the wary Greek
Calm and defenſive bears th' aſſault. At laſt,
As by th' incautious fury of his ſtrokes,
The Perſian ſwung his cov'ring ſhield aſide,
The fatal moment Dithyrambus ſeiz'd.
Light darting forward with his feet outſtretch'd,
Between th' unguarded ribs he plung'd his ſteel.
Affection, grief, and terror, wing the ſpeed
Of Hyperanthes. From his bleeding foe
The Greek retires not diſtant, and awaits
The Perſian prince. But he with wat'ry cheeks
In ſpeechleſs anguiſh claſps his dying friend;
From whoſe cold lip with interrupted phraſe
Theſe accents break: O deareſt, beſt of men!
Ten thouſand thoughts of gratitude and love
Are ſtruggling in my heart—O'erpow'ring fate
Denies my voice the utt'rance—O my friend!
O Hyperanthes! Hear my tongue unfold
What, had I liv'd, thou never ſhould'ſt have known.
I lov'd thy ſiſter. With deſpair I lov'd.
Soliciting this honourable doom,
Without regret in Perſia's ſight and thine
I fall. Th' inexorable hand of fate
Weighs down his eyelids, and the gloom of death
His fleeting light eternally o'erſhades.
Him on Choaſpes o'er the blooming verge

A frantic mother shall bewail; shall strew
Her silver tresses in the crystal wave:
While all the shores re echo to the name
Of Teribazus lost. Th' afflicted prince,
Contemplating in tears the pallid corse,
Vents in these words the bitterness of grief:
Oh, Teribazus! Oh! my friend, whose loss
I will deplore for ever. Oh! what pow'r,
By me, by thee offended, clos'd thy breast
To Hyperanthes in distrust unkind!
She should, she must have lov'd thee—Now no more
Thy placid virtues, thy instructive tongue
Shall drop their sweetness on my secret hours.
But in complaints doth friendship waste the time,
Which to immediate vengeance should be giv'n.
He ended, rushing furious on the Greek;
Who, while his gallant enemy expir'd,
While Hyperanthes tenderly receiv'd
The last embraces of his gasping friend,
Stood nigh, reclin'd in sadness on his shield,
And in the pride of victory repin'd.
Unmark'd, his foe approach'd. But forward sprung
Diomedon. Before the Thespian youth
Aloft he rais'd his targe, and loudly thus:
Hold thee Barbarian, from a life more worth,
Than thou and Xerxes with his host of slaves.
His words he seconds with his rapid lance.
Soon a tremendous conflict had ensu'd;
But Itaphernes, Mindus, and a crowd
Of Persian lords, advancing, fill the space
Betwixt th' encount'ring chiefs. In mutual wrath,
With fruitless efforts they attempt the fight.
So rage two bulls along th' opposing banks
Of some deep flood, which parts the fruitful mead.
Defiance thunders from their angry mouths
In vain: in vain the furrow'd sod they rend;
Wide rolls the stream, and intercepts the war.
As by malignant fortune, if a drop

Of moiſture mingles with a burning maſs
Of liquid metal, inſtant ſhow'rs of death
On ev'ry ſide th' exploding fluid ſpreads;
So diſappointment irritates the flame
Of fierce Platæa's chief, whoſe vengence burſts
In wide deſtruction. Embas, Daucus fall,
Arſæus, Ochos, Mendus, Artias die;
And ten moſt hardy of th' immortal guard,
To ſhivers breaking on the Grecian ſhield
Their gold embelliſh'd weapons, raiſe a mound
O'er thy pale body, O in prime deſtroy'd,
Of Aſia's garden once the faireſt plant,
Fall'n Teribazus! Thy diſtracted friend
From this thy temporary tomb is dragg'd
By forceful zeal of ſatraps to the ſhore;
Where then the brave Abrocomes arrang'd
The ſuccours new, by Abradates brought,
Orontes and Mazæus. Turning ſwift,
Abrocomes inform'd his brother thus:
Strong reinforcement from th' immortal guard
Pandates bold to Intaphernes leads,
In charge to harraſs by perpetual toil
Thoſe Grecians next the mountain. Thou unite
To me thy valour: Here the hoſtile ranks
Leſs ſtable ſeem. Our joint impreſſion try;
Let all the weight of battle here impend.
Rouſe, Hyperanthes. Give regret to winds.
Who hath not loſt a friend this direful day?
Let not our private cares aſſiſt the Greeks,
Too ſtrong already; or let ſorrow act:
Mourn and revenge. Theſe animating words
Send Hyperanthes to the foremoſt line:
His vengeful ardour leads. The battle joins.
Who ſtemm'd this tide of onſet? Who imbru'd
His ſhining ſpear the firſt in Perſian blood?
Eupalamus. Artembares he ſlew,
With Derdas fierce, whom Caucaſus had rear'd
On his tempeſtuous brow, the ſavage ſons
Of violence and rapine. But their doom

Fires Hyperanthes, whose vindictive blade
Arrests the victor in his haughty course.
Beneath the strong Abrocomes o'erwhelm'd,
Meliſſus swells the number of the dead.
None could Mycenæ boast of prouder birth,
Than young Meliſſus, who in silver mail
The line embellish'd. He in Cirrha's mead,
Where high Parnassus from his double top
O'ershades the Pythian games, the envy'd prize
Of fame obtain'd. Low sinks his laurell'd head
In Death's cold night; and horrid gore deforms
The graceful hair. Impatient to revenge
Aristobulus strides before the van.
A storm of fury darkens all his brow.
Around he rolls his gloomy eye. For death
Is Alyattes mark'd, of regal blood,
Deriv'd from Crœsus, once imperial lord
Of nations. Him the nymphs of Halys wept;
When, with delusive oracles beguil'd,
By Delphi's god, he pass'd their fatal waves
A mighhty empire to dissolve: nor knew
Th' ill-destin'd prince, that envious Fortune watch'd
That direful moment from his hand to wrest
The sceptre of his fathers. In the shade
Of humble life, his race on Timolus' brow
Lay hid; till, rous'd to battle, on this field
Sinks Alyattes, and a royal breed,
In him extinct for ever. Lycis dies,
For boist'rous war ill-chosen. He was skill'd
To tune the lulling flute, and melt the heart;
Or with his pipe's awak'ning strain allure
The lovely dames of Lydia to the dance.
They on the verdant level graceful mov'd
In vary'd measures; whiie the cooling breeze
Beneath their swelling garments wanton'd o'er
Their snowy breasts, and smooth Caystter's stream,
Soft-gliding, murmur'd by. The hostile blade
Draws forth his entrails. Prone he falls. Not long
The victor triumphs. From the prostrate corse

Of Lycis, while inſulting, he extracts
The reeking weapon. Hyperanthes' ſteel
Invades his knee, and cuts the ſinewy cords,
The Mycenæans, with uplifted ſhields,
Corinthians and Phliaſians cloſe around
The wounded chieftain. In redoubled rage
The conteſt glows. Abrocomes incites
Each noble Perſian. Each his voice obeys.
Here Abradates, there Mazæus preſs,
Orontes and Hydarnes. None retire
From toil, or peril. Urg'd on ev'ry ſide,
Mycenæ's band to fortune leave their chief.
Diſpairing, raging, deſtitute he ſtands,
Propt on his ſpear. His wound forbids retreat.
None but his brother, Eumenes, abides
The dire extremity. His ſtudded orb
Is held defenſive. On his arm the ſword
Of Hyperanthes rapidly deſcends.
Down drops the buckler, and the ſever'd hand
Reſigns its hold. The unprotected pair
By Aſia's hero to the ground are ſwept;
As to a reaper crimſon poppies low'r
Their heads luxuriant on the yellow plain.
From both their breaſts the vital currents flow,
And mix their ſtreams. Elate the Perſians pour
Their numbers, deep'ning on the foe diſmay'd.
The Greeks their ſtation painfully maintain.
This Anaxander ſaw, whoſe faithleſs tongue
His colleague Leontiades beſpake:
The hour his come to ſerve our Perſian friends.
Behold, the Greeks are preſs'd. Let Thebes retire,
A bloodleſs conqueſt yielding to the king.
This ſaid, he drew his Thebans from their poſt,
Not with unpuniſh'd treachery. The lance
Of Abradates gor'd their foul retreat;
Nor knew the Aſian chief, that Aſia's friends
Before him bled. Meantime, as mighty Jove,
Or he more ancient on the throne of heav'n,
When from the womb of Chaos dark the world

Emerg'd to birth, where'er he view'd the jar
Of atoms yet discordant and unform'd,
Confusion thence with pow'rful voice dispell'd,
Till light and order universal reign'd;
So from the hill Leonidas survey'd
The various war. He saw the Theban rout;
That Corinth, Philius and Mycenæ look'd
Affrighted backward. Instantly his charge
Is borne by Maron, whom obedience wings,
Precipitating down the sacred cave,
That Sparta's ranks, advancing, should repair
The disunited phalanx. Ere they move,
Dieneces inspires them. Fame, my friends,
Calls forth your valour in a signal hour.
For you this glorious crisis she reserv'd
Laconia's splendour to assert. Young man,
Son of Megistias, follow. He conducts
Th' experienc'd troop. They lock their shields,
And wedg'd in dense arrangement repossess the void.
Left by the faithless Thebans, and repulse
Th', exulting Persians. When, with efforts vain
The e oft renew'd the contest, and recoil'd,
As o ft confounded with diminish'd ranks;
Lo! Hyperanthes blush'd, repeating late
The words of Artemisia. Learn, O chiefs,
The only means of glory and success.
Unlike the others, whom we newly chas'd,
These are a band selected from the Greeks,
Perhaps the Spartans, whom we often hear
By Demaratus prais'd. To break their line
In vain we struggle, unarray'd and lax,
Depriv'd of union. Do not we preside
O'er Asia's armies, and our courage boast,
Our martial art above the vulgar herd?
Let us, ye chiefs, attempt in order'd ranks
To form a troop, and emulate the foe.
They wait not dubious. On the Malian shore
In gloomy depth a column soon is form'd
Of all the nobles, Abradates strong,

Orontes bold, Mazæus, and the might
Of brave Abrocomes, with each, who bore
The higheſt honours, and excell'd in arms;
Themſelves the lords of nations, who before
The throne of Xerxes tributary bow'd.
To theſe ſucceed a choſen number, drawn
From Aſia's legions, vaunted moſt in fight;
Who from their kind perpetual ſtipends ſhare;
Who, ſtation'd round the provinces, by force
His tyranny uphold. In ev'ry part
Is Hyperanthes active, ardent ſeen
Throughout the huge battalion. He adjuſts
Their equal range, then cautions, leſt on march
Their unaccuſtom'd order ſhould relax,
Full in the centre of the foremoſt rank
Orontes plants, committing to his hand
Th' imperial ſtandard; whoſe expanded folds
Glow'd in the air, preſenting to the ſun
The richeſt dye of Tyre. The royal bird
Amid the gorgeous tincture ſhone expreſs'd
In high embroider'd gold. The wary prince
On this conſpicuous, leading ſign of war
Commands each ſatrap, poſted in the van,
To fix his eye regardful to direct,
By this alone his even pace, and ſlow,
Retiring, or advancing. So the ſtar,
Chief of the ſpangles on that fancy'd bear,
Once an Idæan nymph, and nurſe of Jove,
Bright Cynoſura to the Boreal pole
Attracts the ſailor's eye; when diſtance hides
The headland ſignals, and her guiding ray,
New-ris'n, ſhe throws. The hero next appoints,
That ev'ry warrior through the length'ning files
Obſerving none but thoſe before him plac'd,
Shall watch their motions, and their ſteps purſue.
Nor is th' important thicket next the paſs
Forgot. Two thouſand of th' immortal guard
That ſtation ſeize. His orders all perform'd,

Close by the standard he assumes his post.
Intrepid thence he animates his friends.
Heroic chieftains, whose unconquer'd force,
Rebellious Egypt, and the Lybian felt,
Think what the splendour of your former deeds
From you exacts. Remember, from the great
Illustrious actions are a debt to fame.
No middle path remains for them to tread,
Whom she hath once ennobled. Lo! this day
By trophies new will signalize your names,
Or in dishonour will for ever cloud.
He said, and vig'rous all to fight proceed.
As when tempestuous Eurus stems the weight
Of western Neptune, struggling through the streights
Which bound Alcides' labours, here the storm
With rapid wing reverberates the tide;
There the contending surge with furrow'd tops
To mountains swells, and, whelming o'er the beach
On either coast, impels the hoary foam
On Mauritanian and Iberian strands:
Such is the dreadful onset. Persia keeps
Her foremost ranks unbroken, which are fill'd
By chosen warriors; while the num'rous crowd,
Though still promiscuous pouring from behind,
Give weight and pressure to th' embattled chiefs
Despising danger. Like the mural strength
Of some proud city, bulwark'd round, and arm'd
With rising tow'rs to guard her wealthy stores,
Immoveable, impenetrable stood
Laconia's serry'd phalanx. In their face
Grim Tyranny her threat'ning fetters shakes,
Red Havoc grinds insatiable his jaws.
Greece is behind, intrusting to their swords
Her laws, her freedom, and the sacred urns
Of their forefathers. Present now to thought
Their altars rise, the mansions of their birth,
Whate'er they honour, venerate and love.
Bright in the Persian van th' exalted lance
Of Hyperanthes flam'd. Beside him press'd

Abrocomes, Hydarnes, and the bulk
Of Abradates, terrible in war.
Firm, as a Memphian pyramid, was seen
Dieneces; while Agis close in rank
With Menalippus, and the added strength
Of dauntless Maron, their connected shields
Upheld. Each unrelax'd array maintains
The conflict undecided; nor could Greece
Repel the adverse numbers, nor the weight
Of Asia's band select remove the Greeks.
Swift from Laconia's king, perceiving soon
The Persian's new arrangement, Medon flew,
Who thus the staid Dieneces address'd:
Leonidas commands the Spartan ranks
To measure back some paces. Soon, he deems,
The unexperienc'd foes in wild pursuit
Will break their order. Then the charge renew.
This heard, the signal of retreat is giv'n.
The Spartans seem to yield. The Persians stop.
Astonishment restrains them, and the doubt
Of unexpected victory. Their sloth
Abrocomes awakens. By the sun
They fly before us. My victorious friends,
Do you delay to enter Greece. Away,
Rush on intrepid. I already hear
Our horse, our chariots, thund'ring on her plains.
I see her temples wrapt in Persian fires.
He spake. In hurry'd violence they roll
Tumultuous forward. All in headlong pace
Disjoin their order, and the line dissolve.
This when the sage Dieneces descries,
The Spartans halt, returning to the charge
With sudden vigour. In a moment pierc'd
By his resistless steel, Orontes falls,
And quits th' imperial banner. This the chief
In triumph waves. The Spartans press the foe,
Close-wedg'd and square, in slow, progressive pace,
O'er heaps of mangled carcases and arms
Invincible they tread. Composing flutes

Each thought, each motion harmonize. No rage
Untunes their souls. The phalanx yet more deep
Of Medon follows; while the lighter bands
Glide by the flanks, and reach the broken foe.
Amid their flight what vengeance from the arm
Of Alpheus falls? O'er all in swift pursuit
Was he renown'd. His active feet had match'd
The son of Peleus in the dusty course;
But now the wrongs, the long-remember'd wrongs
Of Polydorus animate his strength
With tenfold vigour. Like th' empurpled moon,
When in eclipse her silver disk hath lost
The wonted light, his buckler's polish'd face
Is now obscur'd; the figur'd bosses drop
In crimson, spouting from his deathful strokes.
As, when with horror wing'd, a whirlwind rends
A shatter'd navy; from the ocean cast,
Enormous fragments hide the level beach;
Such as dejected Persia late beheld
On Thessaly's unnavigable strand:
Thus o'er the champain satraps lay bestrewn
By Alpheus, persevering in pursuit
Beyond the pass. Not Phœbus could inflict
On Niobé more vengeance, when, incens'd
By her maternal arrogance, which scorn'd
Latona's race, he twang'd his ireful bow,
And one by one from youth and beauty hurl'd
Her sons to Pluto; nor severer pangs
That mother felt, than pierc'd the gen'rous soul
Of Hyperanthes, while his noblest friends
On ev'ry side lay gasping. With despair
He still contends. Th' immortals from their stand
Behind th' entangling thicket next the pass
His signal rouses. Ere they clear their way,
Well-caution'd Medon from the close defile
Two thousand Locrians pours. An aspect new
The fight assumes. Through implicated shrubs
Confusion waves each banner. Falchions, spears,
And shields are all encumber'd, till the Greeks

Had forc'd a paſſage to the yielding foe.
Then Medon's arm is felt. The dreadful boar,
Wide-waſting once the Calydonian fields,
In fury breaking from his gloomy lair,
Rang'd with leſs havoc through unguarded folds,
Than Medon, ſweeping down the glitt'ring files
So vainly ſtyl'd immortal. From the cliff
Divine Meliſſa, and Laconia's king,
Enjoy the glories of Oïleus' ſon.
Fierce Alpheus too, returning from his chaſe,
Joins in the ſlaughter. Ev'ry Perſian falls.
To him the Locrian chief. Brave Spartan, thanks.
Through thee my purpoſe is accompliſh'd full.
My phalanx here with levell'd rows of ſpears
Shall guard the ſhatter'd buſhes. Come what may
From Aſia's camp, th' aſſailant, flank'd and driv'n
Down yonder ſlope, ſhall periſh. Gods of Greece
You ſhall behold your fanes profuſely deck'd
In ſplendid off'rings from barbarian ſpoils,
Won by your free-born ſupplicants this day.
This ſaid, he forms his ranks. Their threat'ning points
Gleam through the thicket, whence the ſhiv'ring foes
Avert their ſight, like paſſengers diſmay'd,
Who on their courſe by Nile's portentous banks
Deſcry in ambuſh of perfidious reeds
The crocodile's fell teeth. Contiguous lay
Thermopylæ. Dieneces ſecur'd
The narrow mouth. Two lines the Spartans ſhow'd,
One tow'rds the plain obſerv'd the Perſian camp;
One, led by Agis, fac'd th' interior paſs.
Not yet diſcourag'd, Hyperanthes ſtrives
The ſcatter'd hoſt to rally. He exhorts,
Entreats, at length indignant thus exclains.
Degen'rate Perſians! to ſepulchral duſt
Could breath return, your fathers from the tomb
Would utter groans. Inglorious, do ye leave
Behind you Perſia's ſtandard to adorn
Some Grecian temple? Can your ſplendid cars,

Voluptuous couches, and dilicious boards,
Your gold, your gems, ye ſatraps, be preſerv'd
By cowardice and flight? The eunuch ſlave
Will ſcorn ſuch lords, your women lothe your beds.
Few hear him, fewer follow; while the fight
His unabating courage oft renews,
As oft repuls'd with danger: till, by all
Deſerted, mixing in the gen'ral rout,
He yields to fortune, and regains the camp.
In ſhort advances thus the dying tide
Beats for a while againſt the ſhelving ſtrand,
Still by degrees retiring, and at laſt
Within the boſom of the main ſubſides.
Though Hyperanthes from the fight was driv'n,
Cloſe to the mountain, whoſe indented ſide
There gave the widen'd paſs an ample ſpace
For numbers to embattle, ſtill his poſt
Bold Intaphernes underneath a cliff
Againſt the firm Platæan line maintain'd.
On him look'd down Leonidas like death,
When, from his iron cavern call'd by Jove,
He ſtands gigantic on a mountain's head;
Whence he commands th' affrighted earth to quake,
And, crags and foreſts in his direful graſp,
High-wielding, daſhes on a town below,
Whoſe deeds of black impiety provoke
The long-enduring gods. Around the verge
Of Oeta, curving to a creſcent's ſhape,
The marbles, timbers, fragments, lay amaſs'd.
The Helots, peaſants, mariners, attend
In order nigh Leonidas. They watch
His look. He gives the ſignal. Rous'd at once
The force, the ſkill, activity and zeal
Of thouſands are combin'd. Down ruſh the piles.
Trees, roll'd on trees, with mingled rock deſcend,
Unintermitted ruin. Loud reſound
The hollow trunks againſt the mountain's ſide.
Swift bounds each craggy maſs. The foes below
Look up aghaſt, in horror ſhrink and die.

Whole troops, o'erwhelm'd beneath th' enormous load,
Lie hid and loſt, as never they had known
A name or being. Intaphernes clad
In regal ſplendour, progeny of kings,
Who rul'd Damaſcus, and the Syrian palms,
Here ſlept for ever. Thouſands of his train
In that broad ſpace the ruins had not reach'd.
Back to their camp a paſſage they attempt
Through Lacedemon's line. Them Agis ſtopp'd,
Before his powerful arm Pandates fell,
Soſarmes, Tachos. Menalippus dy'd
His youthful ſteel in blood. The mightier ſpear
Of Maron pierc'd battalions, and enlarg'd
The track of ſlaughter. Backward turn'd the rout,
Nor found a milder fate. Th' unweary'd ſwords
Of Dithyrambus and Diomedon,
Who from the hill are wheeling on their flank,
Still flaſh tremendous. To the ſhore they fly,
At once envelop'd by ſucceſſive bands
Of diff'rent Grecians. From the gulf profound
Perdition here inevitable frowns.
While there, encircled by a grove of ſpears,
They ſtand devoted hecatombs to Mars:
Now not a moment's interval delays
Their gen'ral doom; but down the Malian ſteep
Prone are they hurry'd to th' expanded arms
Of horror, riſing from the oozy deep,
And graſping all their numbers as they fall.
The dire confuſion like a ſtorm invades
The chaſing ſurge. Whole troops Bellona rolls
In one vaſt ruin from the craggy ridge.
O'er all their arms, their enſigns, deep-ingulf'd,
With hideous roar the waves for ever cloſe.

BOOK IX.

The Argument.

NIGHT coming on, the Grecians retire to their tents. A guard is placed on the Phocian wall under the command of Agis. He admits into the camp a lady, accompanied by a fingle ſlave, and conducts them to Leonidas; when ſhe diſcovers herſelf to be Ariana, ſiſter of Xerxes and Hyperanthes, and ſues for the body of Teribazus; which being found among the ſlain, ſhe kills herſelf upon it. The ſlave who attended her proves to the Polydorus, brother to Alpheus and Maron, and who had been formerly carried into captivity by a Phœnician pirate. He relates, before an aſſembly of the chiefs, a meſſage from Demaratus to the Spartans, which diſcloſes the treachery of the Thebans, and of Epialtes, the Malian, who had undertaken to lead part of the Perſian army through a paſs among the mountains of Oeta. This information throws the council into a great tumult, which is pacified by Leonidas, who ſends Alpheus to obſerve the motions of theſe Perſians, and Dieneces with a party of Lacedemonians to ſupport the Phocians, with whom the defence of theſe paſſages in the hills had been intruſted. In the mean time, Agis ſends the bodies of Teribazus and Ariana to the camp of Xerxes.

IN ſable veſture, ſpangled o'er with ſtars
The night aſſum'd her throne. Recall'd from war,
Their toil, protracted long, the Greeks forget,
Diſſolv'd in ſilent ſlumber all, but thoſe
Who watch th' uncertain perils of the dark,
A hundred warriors. Agis was their chief.
High on the wall intent the hero ſat.
Freſh winds acroſs the undulating bay
From Aſia's hoſt the various din convey'd
In one deep murmur, ſwelling on his ear.
When by the ſound of footſteps down the paſs
Alarm'd he calls aloud. What feet are theſe
Which beat the echoing payment of the rock?
Reply, nor tempt inevitable fate.
A voice reply'd. No enemies we come,
But crave admittance in an humble tone.
The Spartan anſwers. Through the midnight ſhade
What purpoſe draws your wand'ring ſteps abroad?
To whom the ſtranger. We are friends to Greece.
Through thy aſſiſtance we implore acceſs
To Lacedemon's king. The cautious Greek
Still heſitates; when muſically ſweet
A tender voice his wond'ring ear allures.
O gen'rous warrior, liſten to the pray'r
Of one diſtreſs'd, whom grief alone hath led

Through midnight ſhades to theſe victorious tents,
A wretched woman, innocent of fraud.
The chief, deſcending, through th' unfolded gates
Upheld a flaming torch. The light diſcloſ'd
One firſt in ſervile garments. Near his ſide
A woman graceful and majeſtic ſtood,
Not with an aſpect rivalling the pow'r
Of fatal Helen, or th' enſnaring charms
Of love's ſoft queen, but ſuch as far ſurpaſs'd,
Whate'er the lily, blending with the roſe,
Spreads on the cheek of beauty ſoon to fade;
Such as expreſs'd a mind by wiſdom rul'd,
By ſweetneſs temper'd; virtue's pureſt light
Illumining the countenance divine:
Yet could not ſoften rig'rous fate, nor charm
Malignant fortune to revere the good;
Which oft with anguiſh rends a ſpotleſs heart,
And oft aſſociates wiſdom with deſpair.
In courteous phraſe began the chief humane.
Exalted fair, whoſe form adorns the night,
Forbear to blame the vigilance of war.
My ſlow compliance, to the rigid laws
Of Mars impute. In me no longer pauſe
Shall from the preſence of our king withhold
This thy apparent dignity and worth.
Here ending, he conducts her. At the call
Of his lov'd brother from his couch aroſe
Leonidas. In wonder he ſurvey'd
Th' illuſtrious virgin, whom his preſence aw'd.
Her eye ſubmiſſive to the ground declin'd,
In veneration of the godlike man.
His mien, his voice, her anxious dread diſpel,
Benevolent and hoſpitable thus.
Thy looks, fair ſtranger, amiable and great,
A mind delineate, which from all commands
Supreme regard. Relate, thou noble dame,
By what relentleſs deſtiny compell'd,
Thy tender feet the paths of darkneſs tread;
Rehearſe th' afflictions whence thy virtue mourns.

On her wan cheek a ſudden bluſh aroſe
Like day, firſt dawning on the twilight pale;
When, wrapt in grief, theſe words a paſſage found.
If to be moſt unhappy, and to know
That hope is irrecoverably fled;
If to be great and wretched may deſerve
Commiſeration from the brave; behold,
Thou glorious leader of unconquer'd bands,
Behold, deſcended from Darius' loins,
Th' afflicted Ariana; and my pray'r
Accept with pity, nor my tears diſdain.
Firſt, that I lov'd the beſt of human race,
Heroic, wiſe, adorn'd by ev'ry art,
Of ſhame unconſcious doth my heart reveal.
This day, in Grecian arms conſpicuous clad,
He fought, he fell. A paſſion, long conceal'd,
For me, alas! within my brother's arms
His dying breath reſigning, he diſclos'd.
Oh! I will ſtay my ſorrows! will forbid
My eyes to ſtream before thee, and my breaſt,
O'erwhelm'd by anguiſh, will from ſighs reſtrain!
For why ſhould thy humanity be griev'd
At my diſtreſs? why learn from me to mourn
The lot of mortals, doom'd to pain and woe.
Hear then, O king, and grant my ſole requeſt;
To ſeek his body in the heaps of ſlain.
Thus to the hero ſu'd the royal maid,
Reſembling Ceres in majeſtic woe,
When ſupplicating Jove from Stygian gloom,
And Pluto's black embraces to redeem
Her lov'd and loſt Proſerpina. A while
On Ariana fixing ſtedfaſt eyes,
Theſe tender thoughts Leonidas recall'd.
Such are thy ſorrows, O for ever dear,
Who now at Lacedemon doſt deplore
My everlaſting abſence. Then aſide
He turn'd and ſigh'd. Recov'ring, he addreſs'd
His brother. Moſt beneficent of men,
Attend, aſſiſt this princeſs. Night retires

Before the purple-winged morn. A band
Is call'd. The well remember'd spot they find,
Where Teribazus from his dying hand
Dropt in their fight his formidable sword.
Soon from beneath a pile of Asian dead
They draw the hero, by his armour known.
Then, Ariana, what trancending pangs
Were thine! what horrors! In thy tender breast
Love still was mightiest. On the bosom cold
Of Teribazus, grief-distracted maid,
Thy beauteous limbs were thrown. Thy snowy hue
The clotted gore disfigur'd. On his wounds
Loose flow'd thy hair; and, bubbling from thy eyes,
Impetuous sorrow lav'd th' empurpled clay.
When forth in groans these lamentations broke.
O torn for ever from these weeping eyes!
Thou, who despairing to obtain a heart,
Which then most lov'd thee, didst untimely yield
Thy life to Fate's inevitable dart
For her, who now in agony reveals
Her tender passion, who repeats her vows
To thy deaf ear, who fondly to her own
Unites thy cheek, insensible and cold.
Alas! do those unmoving, ghastly orbs
Perceive my gushing sorrow! Can that heart
At my complaint dissolve the ice of death
To share my suff'rings! Never, never more
Shall Ariana bend a list'ning ear
To thy enchanting eloquence, nor feast
Her mind on wisdom from thy copious tongue!
Oh! bitter, insurmountable distress!
She could no more. Invincible despair
Suppress'd all utt'rance. As a marble form,
Fix'd on the solemn sepulchre, inclines
The silent head in imitated woe
O'er some dead hero, whom his country lov'd;
Entranc'd by anguish, o'er the breathless clay
So hung the princess. On the gory breach,
Whence life had issu'd by the fatal blow,

Mute for a ſpace and motionleſs ſhe gaz'd ;
When thus in accents firm. Imperial pomp,
Foe to my quiet, take my laſt farewel.
There is a ſtate, where only virtue holds
The rank ſupreme. My Teribazus there
From his high order muſt deſcend to mine.
Then with no trembling hand, no change of look,
She drew a poignard, which her garment veil'd ;
And inſtant ſheathing in her heart the blade,
On her ſlain lover ſilent ſunk in death.
The unexpected ſtroke prevents the care
Of Agis, pierc'd by horror and diſtreſs,
Like one, who, ſtanding on a ſtormy beach,
Beholds a found'ring veſſel, by the deep
At once ingulf'd ; his pity feels and mourns,
Depriv'd of pow'r to ſave : ſo Agis view'd
The proſtrate pair. He dropp'd a tear, and thus.
Oh ! much lamented ! Heavy on your heads
Hath evil fall'n, which o'er your pale remains
Commands this ſorrow from a ſtranger's eye.
Illuſtrious ruins ! May the grave impart
That peace which life deny'd ! and now receive
This pious office from a hand unknown.
He ſpake unclaſping from his ſhoulders broad
His ample robe. He ſtrew'd the waving folds
O'er each wan viſage, turning then, addreſs'd
The ſlave, in mute dejection ſtanding near.
Thou, who attendant on this hapleſs fair,
Haſt view'd this dreadful ſpectacle, return.
Theſe bleeding relics bear to Perſia's king,
Thou with four captives, whom I free from bonds.
Art thou a Spartan, interrupts the ſlave ?
Doſt thou command me to return, and pine
In climes unbleſs'd by liberty, or laws ?
Grant me to ſee Leonidas. Alone
Let him decide, if wretched, as I ſeem,
I may not claim protection from this camp.
Whoe'er thou art, rejoins the chief, amaz'd,

GLOVER's POEMS.
Then with no trembling hand nor change of look
She drew a poinard which her garment veild,
And justat the sibilge in her heart the blade,
On her chaste Love never sunk in silent death.
Vide Leonidas Book X. Page 140 Line 389.

But not offended, thy ignoble garb
Conceal'd a ſpirit, which I now revere.
Thy countenance demands a better lot
Than I, a ſtranger to thy hidden worth,
Unconſcious offer'd. Freedom dwells in Greece,
Humanity and juſtice. Thou ſhalt ſee
Leonidas their Guardian. To the king
He leads him ſtraight, preſents him in theſe words.
In mind ſuperior to the baſe attire
Which marks his limbs with ſhame, a ſtranger comes,
Who thy protection claims. The ſlave ſubjoins.
I ſtand thy ſuppliant now. Thou ſoon ſhalt learn,
If I deſerve thy favour. I requeſt
To meet th' aſſembled chieftains of this hoſt.
Oh! I am fraught with tidings, which import
The weal of ev'ry Grecian. Agis, ſwift,
Appointed by Leonidas, convenes
The diff'rent leaders. To the tent they ſpeed.
Before them call'd, the ſtranger thus began.
O Alpheus! Maron! Hither turn your ſight,
And know your brother. From their ſeats they ſtart.
From either breaks in ecſtaſy the name
Of Polydorus. To his dear embrace
Each fondly ſtrives to ruſh; but he withſtands:
While down his cheeks a flood of anguiſh pours
From his dejected eyes, in torture bent
On that vile garb, diſhonouring his form.
At length theſe accents, intermix'd with groans,
A paſſage found, while mute attention gaz'd.
You firſt ſhould know, if this unhappy ſlave
Yet merits your embraces. Then approach'd
Leonidas. Before him all recede,
Ev'n Alpheus' ſelf, and yields his brother's hand,
Which in his own the regal hero preſs'd.
Still Polydorus on his gloomy front
Repugnance ſtern to conſolation bore;
When thus the king with majeſty benign.
Lo! ev'ry heart is open to thy worth.
Injurious fortune, and enfeebling time,

By ſervitude and grief ſeverely try
A lib'ral ſpirit. Try'd but not ſubdu'd,
Do thou appear. Whatever be our lot,
Is Heav'n's appointment. Patience beſt becomes
The citizen and ſoldier. Let the fight
Of friends and brethren diſſipate thy gloom.
Of men the gentleſt, Agis too advanc'd,
Who with increas'd humanity began.
Now is thy native liberty ſecure,
Smile on thy paſs'd affliction, and relate
What chance reſtores thy merit to the arms
Of friends and kindred. Polydorus then.
I was a Spartan. When my tender prime
On manhood border'd, from Laconia's ſhores,
Snatch'd by Phœnician pirates, I was ſold
A ſlave, by Hyperanthes bought, and giv'n
To Ariana. Gracious was her hand.
But I remain'd a bondman, ſtill eſtrang'd
From Lacedemon. Demaratus oft
In friendly ſorrow would my lot deplore;
Nor leſs his own ill-fated virtue mourn'd,
Loſt to his country in a ſervile court,
The centre of corruption; where in ſmiles
Are painted envy, treachery, and hate,
With rankling malice; where alone ſincere
The diſſolute ſeek no diſguiſe: where thoſe,
Poſſeſſing all a monarch can beſtow,
Are far leſs happy, than the meaneſt heir
To freedom, far more grovelling than the ſlave,
Who ſerves their cruel pride. Yet here the ſun
Ten times his yearly circle hath renew'd,
Since Polydorus hath in bondage groan'd.
My bloom is paſs'd, or, pining in deſpair,
Untimely wither'd. I at laſt return
A meſſenger of fate, who tidings bear
Of deſolation. Here he paus'd in grief
Redoubled; when Leonidas. Proceed.
Should from thy lips inevitable death
To all be threaten'd, thou art heard by none

Whoſe dauntleſs hearts can entertain a thought,
But how to fall the nobleſt. Thus the king.
The reſt in ſpeechleſs expectation wait.
Such was the ſolemn ſilence, which o'erſpread
The ſhrine of Ammon, or Dodona's ſhades,
When anxious mortals from the mouth of Jove
Their doom explor'd. Nor Polydorus long
Suſpends the counſel, but reſumes his tale.
As I this night accompany'd the ſteps
Of Ariana, near the paſs we ſaw
A reſtleſs form, now traverſing the way,
Now as a ſtatue, rivetted by doubt,
Then on a ſudden ſtarting, to renew
An eager pace. As nearer we approach'd,
He by the moon, which glimmer'd on our heads,
Deſcry'd us. Straight advancing, whither bent
Our midnight courſe, he aſk'd. I knew the voice
Of Demaratus. To my breaſt I claſp'd
The venerable exile, and reply'd.
Laconia's camp we ſeek. Demand no more.
Farewel. He wept. Be heav'n thy guide, he ſaid,
Thrice happy Polydorus. Thou again
May'ſt viſit Sparta, to theſe eyes deny'd.
Soon as arriv'd at thoſe triumphant tents,
Say to the Spartans, from their exil'd king,
Although their blind credulity depriv'd
The wretched Demaratus of his home;
From ev'ry joy ſecluded, from his wife,
His offspring torn, his countrymen, and friends,
Him from his virtue they could ne'er divide.
Say, that ev'n here, where all are kings, or ſlaves,
Amid the riot of flagitious courts,
Not quite extinct his Spartan ſpirit glows,
Though grief hath dimm'd its fires. Rememb'ring this,
Report, that newly to the Perſian hoſt
Return'd a Malian, Epialtes nam'd,
Who, as a ſpy, the Grecian tents had ſought.
He to the monarch magnify'd his art,

Which by deluſive eloquence had wrought
The Greeks to ſuch deſpair; that ev'ry band
To Perſia's ſov'reign ſtandard would have bow'd;
Had not the ſpirit of a ſingle chief,
By fear unconquer'd, and on death reſolv'd,
Reſtor'd their valour; therefore would the king
Truſt to his guidance a ſelected force,
They ſoon ſhould pierce th' unguarded bounds of Greece,
Through a neglected aperture above,
Where no Leonidas ſhould bar their way:
Meantime by him the treach'rous Thebans ſent
Aſſurance of their aid. Th' aſſenting prince
At once decreed two myriads to advance
With Hyperanthes. Ev'ry lord beſides,
Whom youth, or courage, or ambition warm,
Rous'd by the traitor's eloquence, attend
From all the nations with a rival zeal
To enter Greece the foremoſt. In a ſigh
He clos'd---like me. Tremendous from his ſeat
Uproſe Diomedon. His eyes were flames,
When ſwift on trembling Anaxander broke
Theſe ireful accents from his livid lips.
Yet ere we fall, O traitor! ſhall this arm
To hell's avenging furies ſink thy head.
All now is tumult. Ev'ry boſom ſwells
With wrath untam'd, and vengeance. Half unſheath'd,
Th' impetuous falchion of Platæa flames,
But, as the Colchion ſorcereſs, renown'd
In legends old, or Circe, when they fram'd
A potent ſpell, to ſmoothneſs charm'd the main,
And lull'd Æolian rage by myſtic ſong;
Till not a billow heav'd againſt the ſhore,
Nor ev'n the wanton-winged zephyr breath'd
The lighteſt whiſper through the magic air:
So when thy voice, Leonidas, is heard,
Confuſion liſtens; Ire in ſilent awe
Subſides. Withhold this raſhneſs, cries the king,
To proof of guilt let puniſhment ſucceed.

GLOVER'S POEMS.
Great Newton dar'd adventrous to unbraid
The yellow tresses of thy shining hair.
Vide Poem on Sir Isaac Newton. Page 284. line 284.
Designed by J. Thurston. Engraved by A. Smith.
for Cooke. March 1.1800.

Not yet barbarian ſhouts our camp alarm.
We ſtill have time for vengeance, time to know,
If menac'd ruin we may yet repel,
Or how moſt glorious periſh. Next aroſe
Dieneces, and thus th' experienc'd man.
Ere they ſurmount our fences, Xerxes' troops
Muſt learn to conquer, and the Greeks to fly,
The ſpears of Phocis guard that ſecret paſs.
To them let inſtant meſſengers depart,
And note the hoſtile progreſs. Alpheus here.
Leonidas, behold! my willing feet
Shall to the Phocians bear thy high commands;
Shall climb the hill to watch th' approaching foe.
Thou active ſon of valour, quick returns
The chief of Lacedemon, in my thoughts
For ever preſent, when the public weal
Requires the ſwift, the vigilant, and bold.
Go climb, ſurmount the rock's aerial height.
Obſerve the hoſtile march. A Spartan band,
Dieneces, provide. Thyſelf conduct
Their ſpeedy ſuccour to our Phocian friends.
The council riſes. For his courſe prepar'd,
While day, declining, prompts his eager feet,
O Polydorus! Alpheus thus in haſte,
Long loſt, and late recover'd, we muſt part
Again, perhaps for ever. Thou return
To kiſs the ſacred ſoil which gave thee birth,
And calls thee back to freedom. Brother dear,
I ſhould have ſighs to give thee---but farewel.
My country chides me, loit'ring in thy arms.
This ſaid, he darts along, nor looks behind,
When Polydorus anſwers. Alpheus; no.
I have the marks of bondage to eraſe.
My blood muſt waſh the ſhameful ſtain away.
We have a father, Maron interpos'd.
Thy unexpected preſence will rivive
His heavy age, now childleſs and forlorn.
To him the brother with a gloomy frown.
Ill ſhould I comfort others. View theſe eyes.

aint is their light, and vaniſh'd was my bloom
Before its hour of ripeneſs. In my breaſt
Grief will retain a manſion, nor by time
Be diſpoſſeſs'd. Unceaſing ſhall my ſoul
Brood o'er the black remembrance of my youth,
In ſlavery exhauſted. Life to me
Hath loſt its ſavour. Then in ſullen woe
His head declines. His brother pleads in vain.
Now in his view Dieneces appear'd
With Sparta's band. Immoveable his eyes
On them he fix'd, revolving theſe dark thoughts.
I too, like them, from Lacedemon ſpring,
Like them inſtructed once to poiſe the ſpear,
To lift the pond'rous ſhield. Ill deſtin'd wretch!
Thy arm is grown enervate, and would ſink
Beneath a buckler's weight. Malignant fates!
Who have compell'd my free-born hand to change
The warrior's arms for ignominious bonds;
Would you compenſate for my chains, my ſhame,
My ten years anguiſh, and the fell deſpair,
Which on my youth have prey'd; relenting once,
Grant I may bear my buckler to the field,
And, known a Spartan, ſeek the ſhades below.
Why, to be known a Spartan muſt thou ſeek
The ſhades below? Impatient Maron, ſpake.
Live, and be known a Spartan by thy deeds;
Live, and enjoy thy dignity of birth;
Live, and perform the duties which become
A citizen of Sparta. Still thy brow
Frowns gloomy, ſtill unyielding. He, who leads
Our band, all fathers of a noble race,
Will ne'er permit thy barren day to cloſe
Without an offſpring to uphold the ſtate.
He will, replies the brother in a glow,
Prevailing o'er the paleneſs of his cheek,
He will permit me to complete by death
The meaſure of my duty; will permit
Me to achieve a ſervice, which no hand
But mine can render, to adorn his fall

With double luſtre, ſtrike the barb'rous foe
With endleſs terror, and avenge the ſhame
Of an enſlav'd Laconian. Cloſing here
His words myſterious, quick he turn'd away
To find the tent of Agis. There his hand
In grateful ſorrow miniſter'd her aid;
While the humane, the hoſpitable care
Of Agis, gently by her lover's corſe
On one ſad bier the pallid beauties laid
Of Ariena. He from bondage freed
Four eaſtern captives, whom his gen'rous arm
That day had ſpar'd in battle; then began
This ſolemn charge. You, Perſians, whom my ſword
Acquir'd in war, unranſom'd, ſhall depart.
To you I render freedom which you ſought
To wreſt from me. One recompence I aſk,
And one alone. Tranſport to Aſia's camp
This bleeding princeſs. Bid the Perſian king
Weep o'er this flow'r, untimely cut in bloom.
Then ſay, th' all-judging pow'rs have thus ordain'd.
Thou, whoſe ambition o'er the groaning earth
Leads deſolation; o'er the nations ſpreads
Calamity and tears; thou firſt ſhalt mourn,
And through thy houſe deſtruction firſt ſhall range.
Diſmiſs'd, they gain the rampart, where on guard
Was Dithyrambus poſted. He perceiv'd
The mournful bier approach. To him the fate
Of Ariana was already told.
He met the captives with a moiſten'd eye,
Full bent on Teribazus, ſigh'd and ſpake.
O that, aſſuming with thoſe Grecian arms
A Grecian ſpirit, thou in ſcorn hadſt look'd
On princes! Worth like thine, from ſlaviſh courts
Withdrawn, had ne'er been waſted to ſupport
A king's injuſtice. Then a gentler lot
Had bleſs'd thy life, or dying, thou hadſt known
How ſweet is death for liberty. A Greek
Affords theſe friendly wiſhes, though his head
Had loſt the honours, gather'd from thy fall,

When fortune favour'd, or propitious Jove
Smil'd on the better cauſe. Ill-fated pair,
Whom in compaſſion's pureſt dew I lave,
But that my hand infix'd the deathful wound,
And muſt be grievous to your lothing ſhades,
From all the neighb'ring valleys would I cull
Their faireſt growth, to ſtrew your hearſe with flow'rs.
Yet, O accept theſe tears and pious pray'rs!
May peace ſurround your aſhes! May your ſhades
Paſs o'er the ſilent pool to happier ſeats!
He ceas'd in tears. The captives leave the wall,
And ſlowly down Thermopylæ proceed.

BOOK X.

The Argument.

MEDON convenes the Locrian commanders, and harangues them; repairs at midnight to his sister Melissa in the temple, and receives from her the first intelligence, that the Persians were in actual possession of the upper streights, which had been abandoned by the Phocians. Melibœus brings her tidings of her father's death. She strictly enjoins her brother to preserve his life by a timely retreat, and recommends the enforcement of her advice to the prudence and zeal of Melibœus. In the morning the bodies of Teribazus and Ariana are brought into the presence of Xerxes, soon after a report had reached the camp, that great part of his navy was shipwrecked. The Persian monarch, quite dispirited, is persuaded by Argestes to send an ambassador to the Spartan king. Argestes himself is deputed, who, after revealing his embassy in secret to Leonidas, is by him led before the whole army, and there receives his answer. Alpheus returns, and declares, that the enemy was master of the passages in the hills, and would arrive at Thermopylæ the next morning; upon which Leonidas offers to send away all the troops, except his three hundred Spartans; but Diomedon, Demophilus, Dithyrambus, and Megistias refuse to depart: then to relieve the perplexity of Medon, on this occasion, he transfers to him the supreme command, dismisses Argestes, orders the companions of his own fate to be ready in arms by sunset, and retires to his pavillion.

THE Grecian leaders, from the council ris'n,
Among the troops dispersing, by their words,
Their looks undaunted warm the coldest heart
Against new dangers threat'ning. To his tent
The Locrian captains Medon swift convenes,
Exhorting thus. O long approv'd my friends,
You, who have seen my father in the field
Triumphant, bold assistants of my arm
In labours not inglorious, who this day
Have rais'd fresh trophies, be prepar'd. If help
Be further wanted in the Phocian camp,
You will the next be summon'd. Locris lies
To ravage first expos'd. Your ancient fane,
Your goddesses, your priestess half-ador'd,
The daughter of Oïleus, from your swords
Protection claim against an impious foe.
All anxious for Melissa, he dismiss'd
Th' applauding vet'rans; to the sacred cave
Then hasten'd. Under heav'n's night-shaded cope
He mus'd. Melissa in her holy place,
How to approach with inauspicious steps,
How to accost, his pensive mind revolv'd:
When Mycon, pious vassal of the fane,
Descending through the cavern, at the sight

Of Medon ſtopp'd, and thus. Thy preſence, lord,
The prieſteſs calls. To Lacedemon's king
I bear a meſſage, ſuff'ring no delay.
He quits the chief, whoſe rapid feet aſcend,
Soon ent'ring, where the pedeſtal diſplays
Thy form, Calliope ſublime. The lyre,
Whoſe accents immortality confer,
Thy fingers ſeem to wake. On either ſide,
The ſnowy gloſs of Parian marble ſhows
Four of thy ſiſters through ſurrounding ſhade.
Before each image is a virgin plac'd.
Before each virgin dimly burns a lamp,
Whoſe livid ſpires juſt temper with a gleam
The dead obſcurity of night. Apart
The prieſteſs thoughtful ſits. Thus Medon breaks
The ſolemn ſilence. Anxious for thy ſtate,
Without a ſummons to thy pure abode,
I was approaching. Deities, who know
The preſent, paſt, and future, let my lips,
Unblam'd, have utt'rance. Thou, my ſiſter, hear.
Thy breaſt let wiſdom ſtrengthen. Impious foes
Through Oeta now are paſſing. She replies.
Are paſſing, brother! They, alas! are paſs'd,
Are in poſſeſſion of the upper Streight.
Hear in thy turn. A dire narration hear.
A favour'd goat, conductor of my herd,
Stray'd to a dale, whoſe outlet is the poſt
To Phocian's left, and penetrates to Greece.
Him Mycon following by a hoſtile band,
Light-arm'd forerunners of a num'rous hoſt,
Was ſeiz'd. By fear of menac'd torments forc'd,
He ſhow'd a paſſage up that mountain's ſide,
Whoſe length of wood o'erſhades the Phocian land.
To dry and ſapleſs trunks in diff'rent parts
Fire, by the Perſians artfully apply'd,
Soon grew to flames. This done, the troop return'd,
Detaining Mycon. Now the mountain blaz'd.
The Phocians, ill-commanded, left their poſt,
Alarm'd, confus'd. More diſtant ground they choſe.

In blind deluſion forming there, they ſpread
Their ineffectual banners to repel
Imagin'd peril from thoſe fraudful lights,
By ſtratagem prepar'd. A real foe
Meantime ſecur'd the undefended paſs.
This Mycon ſaw. Eſcaping thence to me,
He by my orders haſtens to inform
Leonidas. She paus'd. Like one, who ſees
The forked light'ning into ſhivers rive
A knotted oak, or crumble tow'rs to duſt,
Aghaſt was Medon; then recov'ring, ſpake.
Thou boaſted glory of the Oïlean houſe,
If e'er thy brother bow'd in rev'rence due
To thy ſuperior virtues, let his voice
Be now regarded. From th' endanger'd fane,
My ſiſter fly. Whatever be my lot,
A troop ſelect of Locrians ſhall tranſport
Thy ſacred perſon, where thy will ordains.
Think not of me, returns the dame. To Greece
Direct thy zeal. My peaſants are conven'd,
That by their labour, when the fatal hour
Requires, with maſſy fragments I may bar
That cave to human entrance. Beſt belov'd
Of brothers, now a ſerious ear incline,
A while in Greece to fortune's wanton gale
His golden banner ſhall the Perſian king,
Deluded, wave. Leonidas, by death
Preſerving Sparta, will his ſpirit leave
To blaſt the glitt'ring pageant. Medon, live
To ſhare that glory. Thee to periſh here,
No law, no oracle enjoins. To die,
Uncall'd, is blameful. Let thy pious hand
Secure Oïleus from barbarian force.
To Sparta mindful of her noble hoſt
Intruſt his rev'rend head. Th' aſſembled hinds,
Youths, maidens, wives, with nurſelings at their breaſts,
Around her now in conſternation ſtood,
The women weeping, mute, aghaſt the men.

To them she turns. You never, faithful race,
Your priestess shall forsake. Melissa here,
Despairing never of the public weal,
For better days in solitude shall wait,
Shall cheer your sadness. My prophetic soul
Sees through time's cloud the liberty of Greece
More stable, more effulgent. In his blood
Leonidas cements th' unshaken base
Of that strong tow'r, which Athens shall exalt
To cast a shadow o'er the eastern world.
This utter'd, tow'rd the temple's inmost seat
Of sanctity her solemn step she bends,
Devout, enraptur'd. In their dark'ning lamps
The pallid flames are fainting. Dim through mists
The morning peeps. An awful silence reigns.
While Medon pensive from the fane descends,
But instant re-appears. Behind him close
Treads Melibœus, through the cavern's mouth,
Ascending pale in aspect, not unlike
What legends tell of spectres, by the force
Of necromantic sorcery constrain'd; [join'd,
Through earth's dark bowels, which the spell dis-
They from death's mansion in reluctant sloth
Rose to divulge the secrets of their graves,
Or mysteries of fate. His cheerful brow,
O'erclouded, paleness on his healthful cheek,
A dull, unwonted heaviness of pace
Portend disast'rous tidings. Medon spake.
Turn, holy sister. By the gods belov'd,
May they sustain thee in this mournful hour.
Our father, good Oïleus is no more.
Rehearse thy tidings, swain. He takes the word.
Thou wast not present when his mind, outstretch'd
By zeal for Greece, transported by his joy
To entertain Leonidas, refus'd
Due rest. Old age his ardour had forgot,
To his last waking moment with his guest
In rapt'rous talk redundant. He at last,
Compos'd and smiling in th' embrace of sleep,

To Pan's protection at the island fane
Was left. He wak'd no more. The fatal news
To you discover'd, from the chiefs I hide.
Melissa heard, inclin'd her forehead low
Before th' insculptur'd deities. A sigh
Broke from her heart, these accents from her lips.
The full of days and honours through the gate
Of painless slumber is retir'd. His tomb
Shall stand among his fathers, in the shade
Of his own trophies. Placid were his days,
Which flow'd through blessings. As a river pure,
Whose sides are flow'ry, and whose meadows fair,
Meets in his course a subterranean void;
There dips his silver head, again to rise,
And, rising, glide through flow'rs and meadows new:
So shall Oïleus in those happier fields,
Where never tempests roar, nor humid clouds
In mists dissolve, nor white-descending flakes
Of winter violate th' eternal green;
Where never gloom of trouble shades the mind,
Nor gust of passion heaves the quiet breast,
Nor dews of grief are sprinkled. Thou art gone,
Host of divine Leonidas on earth,
Art gone before him to prepare the feast,
Immortalizing virtue. Silent here,
Around her head she wraps her hallow'd pall.
Her prudent virgins interpose a hymn,
Not in a plaintive, but majestic flow,
To which their fingers, sweeping o'er the chords,
The lyre's full tone attemper. She unveils,
Then with a voice, a countenance compos'd.
Go, Medon, pillar of th' Oïlean house.
New cares, new duties claim thy precious life.
Perform the pious obsequies. Let tears,
Let groans be absent from the sacred dust,
Which Heav'n in life so favour'd, more in death.
A term of righteous days, an envy'd urn
Like his, for Medon is Melissa's pray'r.
Thou, Melibœus, cordial, high in rank

Among the prudent, warn and watch thy lord.
My benediction shall reward thy zeal.
Sooth'd by the blessing of such perfect lips,
They both depart. And now the climbing sun
To Xerxes' tent discover'd from afar
The Persian captives with their mournful load.
Before them Rumour through her sable trump
Breathes lamentation. Horror lends his voice]
To spread the tidings of disastrous fate
Along Spercheos. As a vapour black,
Which from the distant, horizontal verge
Ascending, nearer still and nearer bends
To higher lands its progress, there condens'd,
Throws darkness o'er the valleys, while the face
Of nature saddens round; so step by step,
In motion slow th' advancing bier diffus'd
A solemn sadness o'er the camp. A hedge
Of trembling spears on either hand is form'd.
Tears underneath his iron-pointed cone
The Sacian drops. The Caspian savage feels
His heart transpierc'd, and wonders at the cause.
In Xerxes' presence are the bodies plac'd,
Nor he forbids. His agitated breast
All night had weigh'd against his future hopes
His present losses, his defeated ranks,
By myriads thinn'd, their multitude abash'd,
His fleet thrice worsted, torn by storms, reduc'd
To half its number. When he slept, in dreams
He saw the haggard dead, which floated round
Th' adjoining strands. Disasters new their ghosts,
In sullen frowns, in shrill upbraidings, bode.
Thus, ere the gory bier approach'd his eyes,
He in dejection had already lost
His kingly pride, the parent of disdain,
And cold indifference to human woe.
Not e'en beside his sister's nobler corse
Her humble lover could awake his scorn.
The captives told their piercing tale. He heard;
He felt a while compassion. But ere long

Thoſe traces vaniſh'd from the tyrant's breaſt.
His former gloom redoubles. For himſelf
His anxious boſom heaves, oppreſs'd by fear,
Leſt he with all his ſplendour ſhould be caſt
A prey to fortune. Thoughtful near the throne
Laconia's exile waits. To whom the king.
O Demaratus, what will Fate ordain?
Lo, Fortune turns againſt me! What will check
Her further malice, when her daring ſtride
Invades my houſe with ravage, and profanes
The blood of great Darius. I have ſent
From my unguarded ſide the choſen band,
My braveſt chiefs to paſs the deſert hill;
Have to the conduct of a Malian ſpy
My hopes intruſted. May not there the Greeks
In oppoſition more tremendous ſtill,
More ruinous than yeſter ſun beheld,
Maintain their poſt invincible, renew
Their ſtony thunder in augmented rage,
And ſend whole quarries down the craggy ſteeps
Again to cruſh my army? Oh, unfold
Thy ſecret thoughts, nor hide the harſheſt truth!
Say, what remains to hope? The exile here.
Too well, O monarch, do thy fears preſage,
What may befal thy army! If the Greeks,
Arrang'd within Thermopylæ, a paſs
Acceſſible and practis'd, could repel
With ſuch deſtruction their unnumber'd foes;
What ſcenes of havoc may untrodden paths,
Confin'd among the craggy hills, afford?
Loſt in deſpair, the monarch ſilent ſat.
Not leſs unmann'd than Xerxes, from his place
Uproſe Argeſtes; but concealing fear,
Theſe artful words deliver'd. If the king
Propitious wills to ſpare his faithful bands,
Nor ſpread at large the terror of his pow'r;
More gentle means of conqueſt than by arms,
Nor leſs ſecure may artifice ſupply.
Renown'd Darius, thy immortal ſire

Bright in the ſpoil of kingdoms, long in vain
The fields of proud Euphrates with his hoſt
O'erſpread. At length, confiding in the wiles
Of Zopyrus, the mighty prince ſubdu'd
The Babylonian ramparts. Who ſhall count
The thrones and ſtates by Stratagem o'erturn'd?
But if Corruption join her pow'rful aid,
Not one can ſtand. What race of men poſſeſs
That probity, that wiſdom, which the veil
Of craft ſhall never blind, nor proffer'd wealth,
Nor ſplendid pow'r ſeduce? O Xerxes! born
To more than mortal greatneſs, canſt thou find
Through thy unbounded ſway no dazzling gift,
Which may allure Leonidas? Diſpel
The cloud of ſadneſs from thoſe ſacred eyes.
Great monarch, proffer to Laconia's chief,
What may thy own magnificence declare,
And win his friendſhip. O'er his native Greece
Inveſt him ſov'reign. Thus procure his ſword
For thy ſucceeding conqueſts. Xerxes here,
As from a trance awak'ning, ſwift replies.
Wiſe are thy dictates. Fly to Sparta's chief.
Argeſtes, fall upon him. Bid him join
My arms, and reign o'er ev'ry Grecian ſtate.
He ſcarce had finiſh'd, when in haſte approach'd
Artuchus. Startled at the ghaſtly ſtage
Of death, that guardian of the Perſian fair
Thus in a groan. Thou deity malign,
O Arimanus, what a bitter draught
For my ſad lips thy cruelty hath mix'd!
Is this the flow'r of women, to my charge
So lately giv'n? Oh princeſs! I have rang'd
The whole Sperchean valley, woods, and caves,
In queſt of thee, found here a lifeleſs corſe.
Aſtoniſhment and horror lock my tongue.
Pride now reviving in the monarch's breaſt,
Diſpell'd his black deſpondency a while,
With gall more black effacing from his heart
Each merciful impreſſion. Stern he ſpake,

Remove her, ſatrap, to the female train.
Let them the due ſolemnities perform.
But never ſhe, by Mithra's light I ſwear,
Shall ſleep in Suſa with her kindred duſt;
Who by ignoble paſſions hath debas'd
The blood of Xerxes. Greece beheld her ſhame;
Let Greece behold her tomb. The low-born ſlave,
Who dar'd to Xerxes' ſiſter lift his hopes,
On ſome bare crag expoſe. The Spartan here.
My royal patron, let me ſpeak—and die,
If ſuch they will. This cold, disfigur'd clay
Was late thy ſoldier, gallantly who fought,
Who nobly periſh'd, long the deareſt friend
Of Hyperanthes, hazarding his life
Now in thy cauſe. O'er Perſians thou doſt reign;
None more than Perſians venerate the brave.
Well hath he ſpoke, Atruchus firm ſubjoins.
But if the king his rigour will inflict
On this dead warrior—Heav'n o'erlook the deed,
Nor on our heads accumulate freſh woes!
The ſhatter'd fleet, th' intimidated camp,
The band ſelect, through Oeta's dang'rous wilds
At this dread criſis ſtruggling, muſt obtain
Support from Heav'n, or Aſia's glory falls.
Fell pride, recoiling at theſe awful words
In Xerxes' frozen boſom, yields to fear,
Reſuming there the ſway. He grants the corſe
To Demaratus. Forth Artuchus moves
Behind the bier, upliſted by his train.
Argeſtes, parted from his maſter's ſide,
Aſcends a car; and ſpeeding o'er the beach,
Sees Artemiſia. She the aſhes pale
Of ſlaughter'd Carians on the pyre conſum'd,
Was then collecting for the fun'ral vaſe
In exclamation thus. My ſubjects loſt
On earth, deſcend to happier climes below——
The fawning, daſtard counſellors, who left
Your worth deſerted in the hour of need,
May kites diſfigure, may the wolf devour——

Shade of my husband, thou salute in smiles
These gallant warriors, faithful once to thee,
Nor less to me. They tidings will report
Of Artemisia, to revive thy love——
May wretches like Argestes never clasp
Their wives, their offspring! Never greet their homes!
May their unbury'd limbs dismiss their ghosts
To wail for ever on the banks of Styx!
Then, turning tow'rd her son. Come, virtuous boy,
Let us transport these relics of our friends
To yon tall bark, in pendent sable clad.
They, if her keel be destin'd to return,
Shall in paternal monuments repose.
Let us embark. Till Xerxes shuts his ear
To false Argestes; in her vessel hid,
Shall Artemisia's gratitude lament
Her bounteous sov'reign's fate. Leander, mark,
The Doric virtues are not eastern plants.
Them foster still within thy gen'rous breast,
But keep in covert from the blaze of courts;
Where flatt'ry's guile in oily words profuse,
In action tardy, o'er th' ingenuous tongue,
The arm of valour, and the faithful heart
Will ever triumph. Yet my soul enjoys
Her own presage, that destiny reserves
An hour for my revenge. Concluding here,
She gains the fleet. Argestes sweeps along
On rapid wheels from Artemisia's view,
Like night, protectress foul of heinous deeds,
With treason, rape, and murder at her heel,
Before the eye of morn retreating swift
To hide her lothsome visage. Soon he reach'd
Thermopylæ; descending from his car,
Was led by Dithyrambus to the tent
Of Sparta's ruler. Since the fatal news
By Mycon late deliver'd, he apart
With Polydorus had consulted long
On high attempts; and now sequester'd, sat

To ruminate on vengeance. At his feet
Prone fell the satrap, and began. The will
Of Xerxes bends me prostrate to the earth
Before thy presence. Great and matchless chief,
Thus says the lord of Asia. Join my arms;
Thy recompense is Greece. Her fruitful plains,
Her gen'rous steeds, her flocks, her num'rous towns,
Her sons, I render to thy sov'reign hand.
And, O illustrious warrior, heed my words!
Think on the bliss of royalty, the pomp
Of courts, their endless pleasures, trains of slaves,
Who restless watch for thee, and thy delights:
Think on the glories of unrival'd sway.
Look on th' Ionic, on th' Æolian Greeks.
From them their phantom liberty is flown?
While in each province, rais'd by Xerxes' pow'r,
Some favour'd chief presides; exalted state,
Ne'er giv'n by envious freedom. On his head
He bears the gorgeous diadem; he sees
His equals once in adoration stoop
Beneath his footstool. What superior beams
Will from thy temples blaze, when gen'ral Greece,
In noblest states abounding, calls thee lord,
Thee only worthy. How will each rejoice
Around thy throne, and hail th' auspicious day,
When thou, distinguish'd by the Persian king,
Didst in thy sway consenting nations bless,
Didst calm the fury of unsparing war,
Which else had delug'd all with blood and flames.
  Leonidas replies not, but commands
The Thespian youth, still watchful near the tent
To summon all the Grecians. He obeys.
The king up rises from his seat, and bids
The Persian follow. He, amaz'd, attends,
Surrounded soon by each assembling band;
When thus at length the godlike Spartan spake:
  Here, Persian, tell thy embassy. Repeat,
That to obtain my friendship Asia's Prince
To me hath proffer'd sov'reignty o'er Greece.

Then view these bands, whose valour shall preserve
That Greece unconquer'd, which your king bestows;
Shall strew your bodies on her crimson'd plains;
The indignation, painted on their looks,
Their gen'rous scorn may answer for their chief.
Yet from Leonidas, thou wretch, inur'd
To vassalage and baseness, hear. The pomp,
The arts of pleasure in despotic courts
I spurn abhorrent. In a spotless heart
I look for pleasure. I from righteous deeds
Derive my splendour. No adoring crowd,
No purpled slaves, no mercenary spears
My state embarrass. I in Sparta rule
By laws, my rulers, with a guard unknown
To Xerxes, public confidence and love.
No pale suspicion of th' empoison'd bowl,
Th' assassin's poniard, or provok'd revolt,
Chase from my decent couch the peace deny'd
To his resplendent canopy. Thy king,
Who hath profan'd by proffer'd bribes my ear,
Dares not to meet my arms. Thee, trembling slave,
Whose embassay was treason, I despise,
And therefore spare. Diomedon subjoins:
Our marble temples these Barbarians waste,
A crime less impious, than a bare attempt
Of sacrilege on virtue. Grant my suit,
Thou living temple, where the goodess dwells,
To me consign the caitiff. Soon the winds
Shall parch his limbs on Oeta's tallest pine.
Amidst his fury suddenly return'd
The speed of Alpheus. All, suspended, fix'd
On him their eyes impatient. He began:
I am return'd a messenger of ill.
Close to the passage, op'ning into Greece,
That post committed to the Phocian guard,
O'erhangs a bushy cliff. A station there
Behind the shrubs, by dead of night I took,
Though not in darkness. Purple was the face
Of heav'n. Beneath my feet the valleys glow'd.

A range immenſe of wood-inveſted hills,
The boundaries of Greece, were clad in flames;
An act of froward chance, or crafty foes
To caſt diſmay. The crackling pines I heard;
Their branches ſparkled, and the thickets blaz'd.
In hillocks embers roſe. Embody'd fire,
As from unnumber'd furnaces, I ſaw
Mount high through vacant trunks of headleſs oaks,
Broad-bas'd, and dry with age. Barbarian helms,
Shields, javelins, ſabres, gleaming from below,
Full ſoon diſcover'd to my tortur'd ſight
The ſtreights in Perſia's pow'r. The Phocian chief,
Whate'er the cauſe, relinquiſhing his poſt,
Was to a neighb'ring eminence remov'd;
There by the foe neglected, or contemn'd,
Remain'd in arms, and neither fled, nor fought.
I ſtay'd for day ſpring. Then the Perſians mov'd.
To-morrow's ſun will ſee their numbers here.
He ſaid no more. Unutterable fear
In horrid ſilence wraps the liſt'ning crowd,
Aghaſt, confounded. Silent are the chiefs,
Who feel no terror; yet in wonder fix'd,
Thick-wedg'd, encloſe Leonidas around,
Who thus in calmeſt elocution ſpake:
I now behold the oracle fulfill'd.
Then art thou near, thou glorious, ſacred hour,
Which ſhalt my country's liberty ſecure.
Thrice hail! thou ſolemn period. Thee the tongues
Of virtue, fame and freedom ſhall proclaim,
Shall celebrate in ages yet unborn.
Thou godlike offspring of a godlike ſire,
To him my kindeſt greetings, Medon, bear.
Farewel, Megiſtias, holy friend and brave.
Thou too, experienc'd, venerable chief,
Demophilus, farewel. Farewel to thee,
Invincible Diomedon, to thee,
Unequall'd Dithyrambus, and to all,
Ye other dauntleſs warriors, who may claim
Praiſe from my lips, and friendſhip from my heart.

You after all the wonders which your swords
Have here accomplish'd, will enrich your names
By fresh renown. Your valour must complete
What ours begins. Here first th' astonish'd foe
On dying Spartans shall with terror gaze,
And tremble while he conquers. Then, by fate,
Led from his dreadful victory to meet
United Greece in phalanx o'er the plain,
By your avenging spears himself shall fall.
Forth from the assembly strides Platæa's chief.
By the twelve gods, enthron'd in heav'n supreme;
By my fair name, unsully'd yet, I swear,
Thine eye, Leonidas, shall ne'er behold
Diomedon forsake thee. First, let strength
Desert my limbs, and fortitude my heart.
Did I not face the Marathonian war?
Have I not seen Thermopylæ? What more
Can fame bestow, which I should wait to share?
Where can I, living, purchase brighter praise,
Than dying here? What more illustrious tomb
Can I obtain, than, bury'd in the heaps
Of Persians, fall'n my victims, on this rock
To lie distinguish'd by a thousand wounds?
He ended; when Demophilus. O king
Of Lacedemon, pride of human race,
Whom none e'er equall'd, but the seed of Jove,
Thy own forefather, number'd with the gods,
Lo! I am old. With fault'ring steps I tread
The prone descent of years. My country claim'd
My youth, my ripeness. Feeble age but yields
An empty name of service. What remains
For me unequal to the winged speed
Of active hours, which court the swift and young!
What eligible wish can wisdom form,
But to die well? Demophilus shall close
With thee, O hero, on this glorious earth
His eve of life. The youth of Thespia next
Address'd Leonidas. O first of Greeks,
Me too think worthy to attend thy fame,

With this moſt dear, this venerable man,
For ever honour'd from my tend'reſt age,
Ev'n till on life's extremity we part.
Nor too aſpiring let my hopes be deem'd;
Should the Barbarian in his triumph mark
My youthful limbs among the gory heaps,
Perhaps remembrance may unnerve his arm
In future fields of conteſt with a race,
To whom the flow'r, the blooming joys of life
Are leſs illuring than a noble death.
To him his ſecond parent. Wilt thou bleed,
My Dithyrambus? But I here withhold
All counſel from thee, who art wiſe as brave.
I know thy magnanimity. I read
Thy gen'rous thoughts. Decided is thy choice.
Come then, attendants on a godlike ſhade,
When to th' Elyſian anceſtry of Greece
Deſcends her great protector, we will ſhow
To Harmatides an illuſtrious ſon,
And no unworthy brother. We will link
Our ſhields together. We will preſs the ground,
Still undivided in the arms of death.
So if th' attentive traveller we draw
To our cold reliques, wond'ring ſhall he trace
The diff'rent ſcene, then pregnant with applauſe,
O wiſe old man, exclaim, the hour of fate
Well didſt thou chooſe; and, O unequall'd youth,
Who for thy country didſt thy bloom devote,
May'ſt thou remain for ever dear to fame!
May time rejoice to name thee! O'er thy urn
May everlaſting peace her pinion ſpread.
This ſaid, the hero with his lifted ſhield
His face o'erſhades; he drops a ſecret tear,
Not this a tear of anguiſh, but deriv'd
From fond affection, grown mature with time,
Awak'd a manly tenderneſs alone,
Unmix'd with pity, or with vain regret.
A ſtream of duty, gratitude, and love,
Flow'd from the heart of Harmatides' ſon,

Addreſſing ſtraight Leonidas, whoſe looks
Declar'd unſpeakable applauſe. O king
Of Lacedemon, now diſtribute praiſe
From thy accuſtom'd juſtice, ſmall to me,
To him a portion large. His guardian care
His kind inſtruction, his example train'd
My infancy, my youth. From him I learn'd
To live unſpotted. Could I leſs than learn
From him to die with honour? Medon hears
Shook by a whirlwind of contending thoughts
Strong heaves his manly boſom, under awe
Of wiſe Meliſſa, torn by friendſhip, fir'd
By ſuch example high. In dubious ſtate
So rolls a veſſel, when th' inflated waves
Her planks aſſail, and winds her canvas rend;
The rudder labours, and requires a hand
Of firm, delib'rate ſkill. The gen'rous king
Perceives the hero's ſtruggle, and prepares
To interpoſe relief; when inſtant came
Dieneces before them. Short he ſpake:
Barbarian myriads through the ſecret paſs
Have enter'd Greece. Leonidas, by morn
Expect them here. My ſlender force I ſpar'd.
There to have died was uſeleſs. We return
With thee to periſh. Union of our ſtrength
Will render more illuſtrious to ourſelves,
And to the foe more terrible our fall,
Megiſtias laſt accoſts Laconia's king.
Thou, whom the gods have choſen to exalt
Above mankind in virtue and renown,
O call not me preſumptuous, who implore
Among theſe heroes thy regardful ear.
To Lacedemon I a ſtranger came,
There found protection. There to honours rais'd,
I have not yet the benefit repaid.
That now the gen'rous Spartans may behold
In me their large beneficence not vain,
Here to their cauſe I conſecrate my breath.

Not ſo, Megiſtias, interpos'd the king.
Thou and thy ſon retire. Again the ſeer:
Forbid it, thou eternally ador'd,
O Jove, confirm my perſevering ſoul!
Nor let me theſe auſpicious moments loſe,
When to my bounteous patrons I may ſhow,
That I deſerve their favour. Thou, my child,
Dear Menalippus, heed the king's command,
And my paternal tenderneſs revere.
Thou from theſe ranks withdraw thee, to my uſe
Thy arms ſurrend'ring. Fortune will ſupply
New proofs of valour. Vanquiſh then, or find
A glorious grave; but ſpare thy father's eye
The bitter anguiſh to behold thy youth
Untimely bleed before him. Grief ſuſpends
His ſpeech, and interchangeably their arms
Impart the laſt embraces. Either weeps,
The hoary parent, and the blooming ſon.
But from his temples the pontific wreath
Megiſtias now unlooſens. He reſigns
His hallow'd veſtments; while the youth in tears
The helmet o'er his parent's ſnowy locks,
O'er his broad cheſt adjuſts the radiant mail.
Dieneces was nigh. Oppreſs'd by ſhame,
His downcaſt viſage Menalippus hid
From him, who cheerful thus: Thou need'ſt not bluſh,
Thou hear'ſt thy father and the king command
What I ſuggeſted, thy departure hence.
Train'd by my care, a ſoldier thou return'ſt.
Go practiſe my inſtructions. Oft in fields
Of future conflict may thy proweſs call
Me to remembrance. Spare thy words. Farewel,
While ſuch contempt of life, ſuch fervid zeal
To die with glory animate the Greeks,
Far diff'rent thoughts poſſeſs Argeſte's ſoul.
Amaze and mingled terror chill his blood.
Cold drops, diſtill'd from ev'ry pore, bedew
His ſhiv'ring fleſh. His boſom pants. His knees
Yield to their burden. Ghaſtly pale his cheeks,

Pale are his lips and trembling. Such the minds
Of slaves corrupt; on them the beauteous face
Of virtue turns to horror. But these words
From Lacedemon's chief the wretch relieve:
Return to Xerxes. Tell him, on this rock
The Grecians faithful to their trust await
His chosen myriads. Tell him, thou hast seen
How far the lust of empire is below
A freeborn spirit; that my death, which seals
My country's safety is indeed a boon,
His folly gives a precious boon, which Greece
Will by perdition to his throne repay.
He said. The Persian hastens through the pass.
Once more the stern Diomedon arose.
Wrath overcast his forehead while he spake:
Yet more must stay and bleed. Detested Thebes
Ne'er shall receive her traitors back. This spot
Shall see their perfidy aton'd by death,
E'en from that pow'r, to which their abject hearts
Have sacrific'd their faith. Nor dare to hope,
Ye vile deserters of the public weal,
Ye coward slaves, that mingled in the heaps
Of gen'rous victims to their country's good,
You shall your shame conceal. Whoe'er shall pass
Along this field of glorious slain, and mark
For veneration ev'ry nobler corse;
His heart, though warm in rapturous applause,
A while shall curb the transport to repeat,
His execrations o'er such impious heads,
On whom that fate, to others yielding fame,
Is infamy and vengeance. Dreadful thus
On the pale Thebans sentence he pronounc'd,
Like Rhadamanthus from th' infernal seat
Of judgment, which inexorably dooms
The guilty dead to ever-during pain;
While Phlegethon his flaming volumes rolls
Before their sight, and ruthless furies shake
Their hissing serpents. All the Greeks assent
In clamours, echoing through the concave rock.

Forth Anaxander in th' aſſembly ſtood,
Which he addreſs'd with indignation feign'd:
If yet your clamours, Grecians, are allay'd,
Lo! I appear before you to demand,
Why theſe my brave companions, who alone
Among the Thebans through diſſuading crowds
Their paſſage forc'd to join your camp, ſhould bear
The name of traitors? By an exil'd wretch
We are traduc'd, by Demaratus, driv'n
From Spartan confines, who hath meanly ſought
Barbarian courts for ſhelter. Hath he drawn
Such virtues thence, that Sparta, who before
Held him unworthy of his native ſway,
Should truſt him now, and doubt auxiliar friends?
Injurious men! We ſcorn the thoughts of flight.
Let Aſia bring her numbers; unconſtrain'd,
We will confront them, and for Greece expire.
Thus in the garb of virtue he adorn'd
Neceſſity. Laconia's king perceiv'd
Through all its fair diſguiſe the traitor's heart.
So, when at firſt, mankind in ſcience rude
Rever'd the moon, as bright in native beams,
Some ſage, who walk'd with Nature through her works,
By wiſdom led, diſcern'd the various orb,
Dark in itſelf, in foreign ſplendours clad.
Leonidas concludes. Ye Spartans, hear;
Hear you, O Grecians, in our lot by choice
Partakers, deſtin'd to enrol your names
In Time's eternal record, and enhance
Your country's luſtre: lo! the noontide blaze
Inflames the broad horizon. Each retire;
Each in his tent invoke the pow'r of ſleep
To brace his vigour, to enlarge his ſtrength
For long endurance. When the ſun deſcends,
Let each appear in arms. You, brave allies
Of Corinth, Phlius, and Mycenæ's tow'rs,
Arcadians, Locrians, muſt not yet depart.
While we repoſe, embattled wait. Retreat

When we our tents abandon. I reſign
To great Oïleus ſon ſupreme command.
Take my embraces, Æſchylus. The fleet
Expects thee. To Themiſtocles report,
What thou haſt ſeen and heard. O thrice farewel!
Th' Athenian anſwer'd: To yourſelves, my friends,
Your virtues immortality ſecure,
Your bright examples victory to Greece.
Retaining theſe injunctions, all diſpers'd;
While in his tent Leonidas remain'd
Apart with Agis, whom he thus beſpake:
Yet in our fall the pond'rous hand of Greece
Shall Aſia feel. This Perſian's welcome tale
Of us, inextricably doom'd her prey,
As by the force of ſorcery will wrap
Security around her, will ſuppreſs
All ſenſe, all thought of danger. Brother, know,
That ſoon as Cynthia from the vault of heav'n
Withdraws her ſhining lamp, through Aſia's hoſt
Shall maſſacre and deſolation rage.
Yet not to baſe aſſociates will I truſt
My vaſt deſign. Their perfidy might warn
The unſuſpecting foe, our faireſt fruits
Of glory thus be wither'd. Ere we move,
While on the ſolemn ſacrifice intent,
As Lacedemon's ancient laws ordain,
Our pray'rs we offer to the tuneful nine,
Thou whiſper through the willing ranks of Thebes
Slow and in ſilence to diſperſe and fly.
Now left by Agis, on his couch reclin'd,
The Spartan king thus meditates alone:
My fate is now impending. O my ſoul,
What more auſpicious period couldſt thou chooſe
For death, than now, when beating high in joy,
Thou tell'ſt me I am happy? If to live,
Or die, as virtue dictates, be to know
The pureſt bliſs; if ſhe her charms diſplays
Still lovely, ſtill unfading, ſtill ſerene
To youth, to age, to death: whatever be

Thoſe other climes of happineſs unchang'd,
Which heav'n in dark futurity conceals,
Still here, O virtue, thou art all our good!
Oh, what a black, unſpeakable reverſe
Muſt the unrighteous, muſt the tyrant prove?
What in the ſtruggle of departing day,
When life's laſt glimpſe, extinguiſhing, preſents
Unknown, inextricable gloom? But how
Can I explain the terrors of a breaſt,
Where guilt reſides. Leonidas, forego
The horrrible conception, and again
Within thy own felicity retire;
Bow grateful down to him, who form'd thy mind
Of crimes unfruitful, never to admit
The black impreſſion of a guilty thought.
Elſe could I fearleſs by delib'rate choice
Relinquiſh life? This calm from minds deprav'd
Is ever abſent. Oft in them the force
Of ſome prevailing paſſion for a time
Suppreſſes fear. Precipitate they loſe
The ſenſe of danger; when dominion, wealth,
Or purple pomp, enchant the dazzled ſight,
Purſuing ſtill the joys of life alone.
But he, who calmly ſeeks a certain death,
When duty only, and the gen'ral good
Direct his courage, muſt a ſoul poſſeſs,
Which all content deducing from itſelf,
Can by unerring virtue's conſtant light
Diſcern when death is worthy of his choice.
The man, thus great and happy in the ſcope
Of his large mind, is ſtretch'd beyond his date,
E'en on this ſhore of being, he in thought
Supremely bleſs'd, anticipates the good
Which late poſterity from him derives.
At length the hero's meditations cloſe.
The ſwelling tranſport of his heart ſubſides
In ſoft oblivion; and the ſilken plumes
Of ſleep envelop his extended limbs.

BOOK XI.

The Argument.

LEONIDAS, rising before sunset, dismisses the forces under the command of Medon: but observing a reluctance in him to depart, reminds him of his duty, and gives him an affectionate farewel. He then relates to his own select band a dream, which is interpreted by Megistias, arms himself, and marches in procession with his whole troop to an altar, newly raised on a neighbouring meadow; there offers a sacrifice to the Muses; he invokes the assistance of those goddesses; he animates his companions; then, placing himself at their head, leads them against the enemy in the dead of the night.

THE day was closing. Agis left his tent.
He sought his godlike brother. Him he found
Stretch'd o'er his tranquil couch. His looks retain'd
The cheerful tincture of his waking thoughts
To gladden sleep. So smile soft evening skies,
Yet streak'd with ruddy light, when summer's suns
Have veil'd their beaming foreheads. Transport fill'd
The eye of Agis. Friendship swell'd his heart.
His yielding knee in veneration bent.
The hero's hand he kiss'd, then fervent thus:
O excellence ineffable, receive
This secret homage; and may gentle sleep
Yet longer seal thine eyelids, that, unblam'd,
I may fall down before thee. He concludes
In adoration of his friend divine,
Whose brow the shades of slumber now forsake.
So, when the rising sun resumes his state,
Some white-rob'd magnus on Euphrates side,
Or Indian seer on Ganges prostrate falls
Before th' emerging glory, to salute
That radiant emblem of th' immortal mind.
Uprise both heroes. From their tents in arms
Appear the bands elect. The other Greeks
Are filing homeward. Only Medon stops.
Melissa's dictates he forgets a while.
All inattentive to the warning voice
Of Melibœus, earnest he surveys
Leonidas. Such constancy of zeal
In good Oïleus' offspring brings the fire

To full remembrance in that solemn hour,
And draws these cordial accents from the king:
Approach me, Locrian. In thy look I trace
Consummate faith and love. But, vers'd in arms,
Against thy gen'ral's orders would'st thou stay?
Go, prove to kind Oïleus, that my heart
Of him was mindful, when the gates of death
I barr'd against his son. Yon gallant Greeks,
To thy commanding care from mine transferr'd,
Remove from certain slaughter. Last repair
To Lacedemon. Thither lead thy fire.
Say to her senate, to her people tell,
Here didst thou leave their countrymen and king
On death resolv'd, obedient to the laws.
The Locrian chief, restraining tears, replies:
My sire, left slumb'ring in the island-fane,
Awoke no more. Then joyful I shall meet
Him soon, the king made answer. Let thy worth
Supply thy father's. Virtue bids me die,
Thee live. Farewel. Now Med'on's grief, o'eraw'd
By wisdom, leaves his long-suspended mind
To firm decision. He departs, prepar'd
For all the duties of a man, by deeds
To prove himself the friend of Sparta's king,
Melissa's brother, and Oïleus' son.
The gen'rous victims of the public weal,
Assembled now, Leonidas salutes,
His pregnant soul disburd'ning. O thrice hail!
Surround me, Grecians; to my words attend.
This evening's sleep no sooner press'd my brows,
Than o'er my head the empyreal form
Of heav'n-enthron'd Alcides was display'd,
I saw his magnitude divine. His voice
I heard, his solemn mandate to arise.
I rose. He bade me follow. I obey'd.
A mountain's summit, clear'd from mist, or cloud,
We reach'd in silence. Suddenly the howl
Of wolves and dogs, the vulture's piercing shriek,
The yell of ev'ry beast and bird of prey

Diſcordant grated on my ear. I turn'd.
A ſurface hideous, delug'd o'er with blood,
Beyond my view illimitably ſtretch'd,
One vaſt expanſe of horror. There ſupine,
Of huge dimenſion, cov'ring half the plain,
A giant corſe lay mangled, red with wounds,
Delv'd in th' enormous fleſh, which, bubbling, fed
Ten thouſand thouſand griſly beaks and jaws,
Inſatiably devouring. Mute I gaz'd;
When from behind I heard a ſecond ſound
Like ſurges, tumbling o'er a craggy ſhore.
Again I turn'd. An ocean there appear'd
With riven keels and ſhrouds, with ſhiver'd oars,
With arms and welt'ring carcaſſes beſtrewn
Innumerous. The billows foam'd in blood.
But where the waters, unobſerv'd before,
Between two adverſe ſhores, contracting, roll'd
A ſtormy current, on the beach forlorn
One of majeſtic ſtature I deſcry'd
In ornaments imperial. Oft he bent
On me his clouded eyeballs. Oft my name
He ſounded fourth in execrations loud;
Then rent his ſplendid garments; then his head
In rage diveſted of its graceful hairs.
Impatient now he ey'd a ſlender ſkiff,
Which, mounted high on boiſtrous waves, approach'd.
With indignation, with reluctant grief
Once more his ſight reverting, he embark'd
Amid the perils of the frowning deep.
O thou, by glorious actions rank'd in heav'n,
I here exclaim'd, inſtruct me. What produc'd
This deſolation? Hercules reply'd:
Let thy aſtoniſh'd eye again ſurvey
The ſcene, thy ſoul abhorr'd. I look'd. I ſaw
A land, where plenty with diſporting hands
Pour'd all the fruits of Amalthea's horn;
Where bloom'd the olive; where the cluſt'ring vine
With her broad foliage mantled ev'ry hill;
Where Ceres with exuberance enrob'd

The pregnant boſoms of the fields in gold ;
Where ſpacious towns, whoſe circuits proud contain'd
The dazzling works of wealth along the banks
Of copious rivers ſhow'd their ſtately tow'rs,
The ſtrength and ſplendour of the peopled land.
Then in a moment clouds obſcur'd my view ;
At once all vaniſh'd from my waking eyes.
Thrice I ſalute the omen, loud began
The ſage Megiſtias. In this myſtic dream
I ſee my country's victories. The land,
The deep ſhall own her triumphs ; while the tears
Of Aſia and of Libya ſhall deplore
Their offspring, caſt before the vulture's beak,
And every monſtrous native of the main.
Thoſe joyous fields of plenty picture Greece,
Enrich'd by conqueſt, and barbarian ſpoils.
He, whom thou ſaw'ſt, in regal veſture clad,
Print on the ſand his ſolitary ſtep,
Is Xerxes, foil'd and fugitive. So ſpake
The rev'rend augur. Ev'ry boſom felt
Enthuſiaſtic rapture, joy beyond
All ſenſe, and all conception, but of thoſe
Who die to ſave their country. Here again
Th' exulting band Leonidas addreſs'd.
Since happineſs from virtue is deriv'd,
Who for his country dies, that moment proves
Moſt happy, as moſt virtuous. Such our lot.
But go, Megiſtias. Inſtantly prepare
The ſacred fuel, and the victim due ;
That to the Muſes (ſo by Sparta's law
We are enjoin'd) our off'rings may be paid,
Before we march. Remember, from the rites
Let ev'ry ſound be abſent ; not the fife,
Not e'en the muſic breathing flute be heard.
Meantime, ye leaders, every band inſtruct
To move in ſilence. Mindful of their charge
The chiefs depart. Leonidas provides
His various armour. Agis cloſe attends,
His beſt aſſiſtant. Firſt a breaſt-plate arms

The ſpacious cheſt. O'er this the hero ſpreads
The mailed cuiraſs, from his ſhoulders hung.
A ſhining belt infolds his mighty loins.
Next on his ſtately temples he erects
The plumed helm; then graſps his pond'rous ſhield:
Where nigh the centre, on projecting braſs,
Th' inimitable artiſt had emboſs'd
The ſhape of great Alcides; whom to gain
Two goddeſſes contended. Pleaſure here
Won by ſoft wiles th' attracted eye; and there
The form of Virtue dignify'd the ſcene.
In her majeſtic ſweetneſs was diſplay'd
The mind ſublime and happy. From her lips
Seem'd eloquence to flow. In look ſerene,
But fix'd intenſely on the ſon of Jove,
She wav'd her hand, where, winding to the ſkies,
Her paths aſcended. On the ſummit ſtood,
Supported by a trophy near to heav'n,
Fame, and protended her eternal trump.
The youth, attentive to her wiſdom, own'd
The pravalence of virtue; while his eye,
Fill'd by that ſpirit, which redeem'd the world
From tyranny and monſters, darted flames;
Not undeſcry'd by Pleaſure, where ſhe lay
Beneath a gorgeous canopy. Around
Were flowrets ſtrewn, and wantonly in rills
A fount meander'd. All relax'd her limbs;
Nor wanting yet ſolicitude to gain,
What loſt ſhe fear'd, as ſtruggling with deſpair,
She ſeem'd collecting every pow'r to charm:
Exceſs of ſweet allurement ſhe diffus'd
In vain. Still virtue ſway'd Alcides mind.
Hence all his labours. Wrought with vary'd art,
The ſhield's external ſurface they enrich'd.

This portraiture of glory on his arm
Leonidas diſplays, and, tow'ring, ſtrides
From his pavillion. Ready are the bands.
The chiefs aſſume their ſtation. Torches blaze
Through ev'ry file. All now in ſilent pace

To join in ſolemn ſacrifice proceed.
Firſt Polydorus bears the hallow'd knife,
The ſacred ſalt and barley. At his ſide
Diomedon ſuſtains a weighty mace.
The prieſt, Megiſtias, follows like the reſt
In poliſh'd armour. White as winter's fleece,
A fillet round his ſhining helm reveals
The ſacerdotal honours. By the horns,
Where laurels twine, with Alpheus Maron leads
The conſecrated ox. And lo! behind,
Leonidas advances. Never he
In ſuch tranſcendent majeſty was ſeen,
And his own virtue never ſo enjoy'd.
Succeſſive move Dieneces the brave,
In hoary ſtate Demophilus, the bloom
Of Dithyrambus, glowing in the hope
Of future praiſe, the gen'rous Agis next
Serene and graceful, laſt the Theban chiefs,
Repining, ignominious: then ſlow march
The troops all mute, nor ſhake their brazen arms.
Not from Thermopylæ remote the hills
Of Oeta, yielding to a fruitful dale,
Within their ſide, half-circling, had enclos'd
A fair expanſe in verdure ſmooth. The bounds
Were edg'd by wood. o'erlook'd by ſnowy cliffs,
Which from the clouds bent frowning. Down a rock
Above the loftieſt ſummit of the grove
A tumbling torrent wore the ſhaggy ſtone;
Then, gleaming through the intervals of ſhade,
Attain'd the valley, where the level ſtream
Diffus'd refreſhment. On its banks the Greeks
Had rais'd a ruſtic altar, fram'd of turf.
Broad was the ſurface, high in piles of wood,
All interſpers'd with laurel. Purer deem'd,
Than river, lake, or fountain, in a vaſe
Old Ocean's briny element was plac'd
Before the altar; and of wine unmix'd
Capacious goblets ſtood. Megiſtias now

His helm unlooſen'd. With his ſnowy head
Uncover'd, round the ſolemn pile he trod.
He ſhook a branch of laurel, ſcatt'ring wide
The ſacred moiſture of the main. His hand
Next on the altar, on the victim ſtrew'd
The mingled ſalt and barley. O'er the horns
Th' inverted chalice, foaming from the grape,
Diſcharg'd a rich libation. Then approach'd
Diomedon. Megiſtias gave the ſign.
Down ſunk the victim by a deathful ſtroke,
Nor groan'd. The augur bury'd in the throat
His hallow'd ſteel. A purple current flow'd.
Now ſmok'd the ſtructure, now it flam'd abroad
In ſudden ſplendour. Deep in circling ranks
The Grecians preſs'd. Each held a ſparkling brand;
The beaming lances intermix'd; the helms,
The burniſh'd armour multiply'd the blaze.
Leonidas drew nigh. Before the pile
His feet he planted. From his brows remov'd,
The caſque to Agis he conſign'd, his ſhield,
His ſpear to Dithyrambus; then, his arms
Extending, forth in ſupplications broke.
Harmonious daughters of Olympian Jove,
Who, on the top of Helicon ador'd,
And high Parnaſſus, with delighted ears
Bend to the warble of Caſtalia's ſtream,
Or Aganippe's murmur, if from thence
We muſt invoke your preſence; or along
The neighb'ring mountains with propitious ſteps
If now you grace your conſecrated bow'rs,
Look down, ye muſes; nor diſdain to ſtand
Each an immortal witneſs of our fate.
But with you bring fair Liberty, whom Jove,
And you muſt honour. Let her ſacred eyes
Approve her dying Grecians; let her voice
exultation tell the earth and heav'ns,
Theſe are her ſons. Then ſtrike your tuneful ſhells.
Record as guardians of our parent's age,
Our matron's virtue, and our children's bloom,

The glorious bulwarks of our country's laws,
Who shall ennoble the historian's page,
Shall on the joyous festival inspire
With loftier strains the virgin's choral song.
Then, O celestial maids, on yonder camp
Let night sit heavy. Let a sleep like death
Weigh down the eye of Asia. O infuse
A cool, untroubled spirit in our breasts,
Which may in silence guide our daring feet,
Control our fury, nor by tumult wild
The friendly dark affright; till dying groans
Of slaughter'd tyrants into horror wake
The midnight calm. Then turn destruction loose.
Let terror, let confusion rage around,
In one vast ruin heap the barb'rous ranks,
Their horse, their chariots. Let the spurning steed
Imbrue his hoofs in blood, the shatter'd cars
Crush with their brazen weight the prostrate necks
Of chiefs and kings, encircled, as they fall,
By nations slain. You, countrymen and friends,
My last commands retain. Your gen'ral's voice
Once more salutes you, not to rouse the brave,
Or minds, resolv'd and dauntless, to confirm.
Too well by this expiring blaze I see
Impatient valour flash from ev'ry eye.
O temper well that ardour, and your lips
Close on the rising transport. Mark, how sleep
Hath folded millions in his black embrace.
No sound is wafted from th' unnumber'd foe.
The winds themselves are silent. All conspires
To this great sacrifice, where thousands soon
Shall only wake to die. Their crowded train
This night perhaps to Pluto's dreary shades
Ev'n Xerxes' ghost may lead, unless reserv'd
From this destruction to lament a doom
Of more disgrace, when Greece confounds that pow'r
Which we shall shake. But look, the setting moon
Shuts on our darksome paths her waining horns.
Let each his head distinguish by a wreath

Of well-earn'd laurel. Then the victim ſhare,
Then crown the goblet. Take your laſt repaſt;
With your forefathers and the heroes old
You next will banquet in the bleſs'd abodes.
Here ends their leader. Through th' encircling crowd
The agitation of their ſpears denotes
High ardour. So the ſpiry growth of pines
Is rock'd, when Æolus in eddies winds
Among their ſtately trunks on Pelion's brow.
The Acarnanian ſeer diſtributes ſwift
The ſacred laurel. Snatch'd in eager zeal,
Around each helm the woven leaves unite,
Their gloſſy verdure to the floating plumes.
Then is the victim portion'd. In the bowl
Then flows the vine's empurpled ſtream. Aloof
The Theban train in wan dejection mute
Brood o'er their ſhame, or caſt affrighted looks
On that determin'd courage, which, unmov'd
At fate's approach, with cheerful lips could taſte
The ſparkling goblet, could in joy partake
That laſt, that glorious banquet. Ev'n the heart
Of Anaxander had forgot its wiles,
Diſſembling fear no longer. Agis here,
Regardful ever of the king's command,
Accoſts the Theban chiefs in whiſpers thus:
Leonidas permits you to retire.
While on the rites of ſacrifice employ'd,
None heed your motions. Separate and fly
In ſilent pace. This heard, th' inglorious troop,
Their files diſſolving, from the reſt withdraw.
Unſeen they moulder from the hoſt like ſnow,
Freed from the rigour of conſtraining froſt;
Soon as the ſun exerts his orient beam,
The tranſitory landſcape melts in rills
Away, and ſtructures, which delude the eye,
Inſenſibly are loſt. The ſolemn feaſt
Was now concluded. Now Laconia's king
Had reaſſum'd his arms. Before his ſtep
The crowd roll backward. In their gladden'd ſight

His creſt, illumin'd by uplifted brands,
Its purple ſplendour ſhakes. The tow'ring oak
Thus from a lofty promontory waves
His majeſty of verdure. As with joy
The ſailors mark his heav'n-aſcending pride,
Which from afar directs their foamy courſe
Along the pathleſs ocean; ſo the Greeks
In tranſport gaze, as down their op'ning ranks
The king proceeds: from whoſe ſuperior frame
A ſoul like thine, O Phidias, might conceive
In Parian marble, or effulgent braſs
The form of great Apollo; when the god,
Won by the pray'rs of man's afflicted race,
In arms forſook his lucid throne to pierce
The monſter Python in the Delphian vale.
Cloſe by the hero Polydorus waits
To guide deſtruction through the Aſian tents.
As the young eagle near his parent's ſide
In wanton flight eſſays his vig'rous wing,
Ere long with her to penetrate the clouds,
To dart impetuous on the fleecy train,
And dye his beak in gore; by Sparta's king
The injur'd Polydorus thus prepares
His arm for death. He feaſts his angry ſoul
On promis'd vengeance. His impatient thoughts
Ev'n now tranſport him furious to the ſeat
Of his long ſorrows, not with fetter'd hands,
But now once more a Spartan with his ſpear,
His ſhield reſtor'd, to lead his country's bands,
And with them devaſtation. Nor the reſt
Neglect to form. Thick-rang'd, the helmets blend
Their various plumes, as intermingling oaks
Combine their foliage in Dodona's grove;
Or as the cedars on the Syrian hills
Their ſhady texture ſpread. Once more the king,
O'er all the phalanx his conſid'rate view
Extending, through the ruddy gleam deſcries
One face of gladneſs; but the godlike van
He moſt contemplates: Agis, Alpheus there,

Megiſtias, Maron with Platæa's chief,
Dieneces, Demophilus are ſeen
With Theſpia's youth: nor they their ſteady ſight
From his remove, in ſpeechleſs tranſport bound
By love, by veneration; till they hear
His laſt injunction. To their diff'rent poſts
They ſep'rate. Inſtant on the dewy turf
Are caſt th' extinguiſh'd brands. On all around
Drops ſudden darkneſs, on the wood, the hill,
The ſnowy ridge, the vale, the ſilver ſtream.
It verg'd on midnight. Tow'rd the hoſtile camp
In march compos'd and ſilent down the paſs
The phalanx mov'd. Each patient boſom huſh'd
Its ſtruggling ſpirit, nor in whiſpers breath'd
The rapt'rous ardour, virtue then inſpir'd.
So low'ring clouds along th' ethereal void
In ſlow expanſion from the gloomy north
A while ſuſpend their horrors, deſtin'd ſoon
To blaze in lightnings, and to burſt in ſtorms.

BOOK XII.

The Argument.

Leonidas and the Grecians penetrate through the Perſian camp to the very pavilion of Xerxes, who avoids deſtruction by flight. The barbarians are ſlaughtered in great multitudes, and their camp is ſet on fire. Leonidas conducts his men in good order back to Thermopylæ, engages the Perſians, who were deſcended from the hills, and after numberleſs proofs of ſuperior ſtrength and valour, ſinks down covered with wounds, and expires the laſt of all the Grecian commanders.

ACROSS th' unguarded bound of Aſia's camp
Slow paſs the Grecians. Through unnum'rous tents,
Where all is mute and tranquil, they purſue
Their march ſedate. Beneath the leaden hand
Of ſleep lie millions motionleſs and deaf,
Nor dream of fate's approach. Their wary foes,
By Polydorus guided, ſtill proceed.
Ev'n to the centre of th' extenſive hoſt
They pierce unſeen; when lo! th' imperial tent
Yet diſtant roſe before them. Spreading round
Th' auguſt pavillion, was an ample ſpace
For thouſands in arrangement. Here a band
Of choſen Perſians, watchful o'er the king,
Held their nocturnal ſtation, As the hearts
Of anxious nations, whom th' unſparing ſword,
Or famine threaten, tremble at the ſight
Of fear engender'd phantoms in the ſky.
Aerial hoſts amid the clouds array'd,
Portending woe and death; the Perſian guard
In equal conſternation now deſcry'd
The glimpſe of hoſtile armour. All diſband,
As if auxiliar to his favour'd Greeks.
Pan held their banner, ſcatt'ring from its folds
Fear and confuſion, which to Xerxes couch
Swift-winged, fly; thence ſhake the gen'ral camp,
Whoſe numbers iſſue naked, pale, unarm'd,
Wild in amazement, blinded by diſmay,
To every foe obnoxious. In the breaſts
Of thouſands, gor'd at once, the Grecian ſteel
Reeks in Deſtruction. Deluges of blood

Float o'er the field, and foam around the heaps
Of wretches, slain unconscious of the hand,
Which wastes their helpless multitude. Amaze,
Affright, distraction from his pillow chase
The lord of Asia, who in thought beholds
United Greece in arms. Thy lust of pow'r!
Thy hope of glory! whither are they flown
With all thy pomp? In this disast'rous hour
What could avail the immeasurable range
Of thy proud camp, save only to conceal
Thy trembling steps, O Xerxes, while thou fly'st?
To thy deserted couch with other looks
With other steps Leonidas is nigh.
Before him terror strides. Gigantic death,
And desolation at his side attend.
The vast pavillion's empty space, where lamps
Of gold shed light and odours, now admits
The hero. Ardent throngs behind him press,
But miss their victim. To the ground are hurl'd
The glitt'ring ensigns of imperial state.
The diadem, the sceptre, late ador'd
Through boundless kingdoms, underneath their feet
In mingled rage and scorn the warriors crush
A sacrifice to freedom. They return
Again to form. Leonidas exalts,
For new destruction his resistless spear;
When double darkness suddenly descends.
The clouds, condensing, intercept the stars.
Black o'er the furrow'd main the raging east
In whirlwinds sweeps the surge. The coasts resound.
The cavern'd rocks, the crashing forests roar.
Swift through the camp the hurricane impels
Its rude career; when Asia's numbers, veil'd
Amid the shelt'ring horrors of the storm,
Evade the victor's lance. The Grecians halt;
While to their gen'ral's pregnant mind occurs
A new attempt and vast. Perpetual fire
Beside the tent of Xerxes from the hour,
He lodg'd his standards on the Malian plains,

Had ſhone. Among his Magi to adore
Great Horomazes was the monarch wont
Before the ſacred light. Huge piles of wood
Lay nigh, prepar'd to feed the conſtant flame.
On living embers theſe are caſt. So wills
Leonidas. The phalanx then divides.
Four troops are form'd, by Dithyrambus led,
By Alpheus, by Diomedon. The laſt
Himſelf conducts. The word is giv'n. They ſeize
The burning fuel. Sparkling in the wind,
Deſtructive fire is brandiſh'd. All, enjoin'd
To re-aſſemble at the regal tent,
By various paths the hoſtile camp invade.
Now devaſtation, unconfin'd, involves
The Malian fields. Among Barbarian tents
From diff'rent ſtations fly conſuming flames.
The Greeks afford no reſpite; and the ſtorm
Exaſperates the blaze. To ev'ry part
The conflagration like a ſea expands,
One waving ſurface of unbounding fire,
In ruddy volumes mount the curling flames
To heav'n's dark vault, and paint the midnight clouds.
So, when the north emits his purpled lights,
The undulated radiance, ſtreaming wide,
As with a burning canopy inveſts
Th' ethereal concave. Oeta now diſclos'd
His forehead, glitt'ring in eternal froſt;
While down his rocks the foamy torrents ſhone.
Far o'er the main the pointed rays were thrown;
Night ſnatch'd her mantle from the ocean's breaſt;
The billows glimmer'd from the diſtant ſhores.
But lo! a pillar huge of ſmoke aſcends,
Which overſhades the field. There horror, there
Leonidas preſides. Command he gave
To Polydorus, who, exulting, ſhow'd
Where Aſia's horſe, and warlike cars poſſeſs'd
A crowded ſtation. At the hero's nod
Devouring Vulcan riots on the ſtores
Of Ceres, empty'd of the ripen'd grain,

On all the tribute from her meadows brown,
By rich Theſſalia render'd to the ſcythe.
A flood of fire envelopes all the ground.
The cordage burſts around the blazing tents.
Down ſink the roofs on ſuffocated throngs,
Cloſe-wedg'd by fear. The Lybian chariot burns.
Th' Arabian camel, and the Perſian ſteed
Bound through a burning deluge. Wild with pain
They ſhake their ſinged manes. Their madding hoofs
Daſh through the blood of thouſands, mix'd with flames
Which rage, augmented by the whirlwind's blaſt.
Meantime the ſcepter'd lord of half the globe
From tent to tent precipitates his flight.
Diſpers'd are all his ſatraps. Pride herſelf
Shuns his dejected brow. Deſpair alone
Waits on th' imperial fugitive, and ſhows,
As round the camp his eye, diſtracted, roves,
No limits to deſtruction. Now is ſeen
Aurora, mounting from her eaſtern hill
In roſy ſandals, and with dewy locks.
The winds ſubſide before her; darkneſs flies;
A ſtream of light proclaims the cheerful day,
Which ſees at Xerxes' tent the conqu'ring bands,
All reunited. What could fortune more
To aid the valiant, what to gorge revenge?
Lo! deſolation o'er the adverſe hoſt
Hath empty'd all her terrors. Ev'n the hand
Of languid Slaughter dropt the crimſon ſteel
Nor nature longer can ſuſtain the toil
Of unremitting conqueſt. Yet what pow'r
Among theſe ſons of liberty reviv'd
Their drooping warmth, new-ſtrung their nerves, recall'd
Their weary'd ſwords to deeds of brighter fame?
What, but th' inſpiring hope of glorious death
To crown their labours, and th' auſpicious look
Of their heroic chief, which, ſtill unchang'd,
Still in ſuperior majeſty declar'd,
No toil had yet relax'd his matchleſs ſtrength,

Nor worn the vigour of his godlike ſoul.
Back to the paſs in gentle march he leads
Th' embattled warriors. They behind the ſhrubs,
Where Medon ſent ſuch numbers to the ſhades,
In ambuſh lie. The tempeſt is o'erblown.
Soft breezes only from the Malian wave
O'er each grim face, beſmear'd with ſmoke and gore,
Their cool refreſhment breathe. The healing gale,
A cryſtal rill near Oeta's verdant feet
Diſpel the languor from their harraſs'd nerves,
Freſh brac'd by ſtrength returning. O'er their heads,
Lo! in full blaze of majeſty appears
Meliſſa, bearing in her hand divine
Th' eternal guardian of illuſtrious deeds,
The ſweet Phœbean lyre. Her graceful train
Of white-rob'd virgins, ſeated on a range
Half down the cliff, o'erſhadowing the Greeks,
All with concordant ſtrings, and accents clear
A torrent pour of melody, and ſwell
A high, triumphal, ſolemn dirge of praiſe,
Anticipating fame. Of endleſs joys
In bleſs'd Elyſium was the ſong. Go, meet
Lycurgus, Solon and Zaleucus ſage,
Let them ſalute the children of their laws.
Meet Homer, Orpheus and th' Aſcrean bard,
Who, with a ſpirit, by ambroſial food
Refin'd, and more exalted, ſhall contend
Your ſplendid fate to warble through the bow'rs
Of amaranth and myrtle ever young
Like your renown. Your aſhes we will cull.
In yonder fane depoſited, your urns
Dear to the muſes ſhall our lays inſpire.
Whatever off'rings, genius, ſcience, art
Can dedicate to virtue, ſhall be yours,
The gifts of all the muſes, to tranſmit
You on th' enliven'd canvaſs, marble, braſs,
In wiſdom's volume, in the poet's ſong,
In ev'ry tongue, through ev'ry age and clime,
You of this earth the brighteſt flow'rs, not cropt,

Tranſplanted only to immortal bloom
Of praiſe with men, of happineſs with gods.
The Grecian valour on religion's flame
To ecſtaſy is wafted. Death is nigh.
As by the graces faſhion'd, he appears
A beauteous form. His adamantine gate
Is half unfolded. All in tranſport catch
A glimpſe of immortality. Elate
In rapturous deluſion they believe,
That to behold and ſolemnize their fate
The goddeſſes are preſent on the hills
With celebrating lyres. In thought ſerene
Leonidas the kind deception bleſs'd,
Nor undeceiv'd his ſoldiers. After all
Th' inceſſant labours of the horrid night,
Through blood, through flames continu'd, he prepares
In order'd battle to confront the pow'rs
Of Hyperanthes from the upper ſtreights.
Not long the Greeks in expectation wait
Impatient. Sudden with tumultuous ſhouts
Like Nile's rude current, where in deaf'ning roar
Prone from the ſteep of Elephantis falls
A ſea of waters, Hyperanthes pours
His choſen numbers on the Grecian camp
Down from the hills precipitant. No foes
He finds. The Thebans join him. In his van
They march conductors. On, the Perſians roll
In martial thunder through the ſounding paſs.
They iſſue forth impetuous from its mouth.
That moment Sparta's leader gave the ſign;
When, as th' impulſive ram in forceful ſway
O'erturns a nodding rampart from its baſe,
And ſtrews a town with ruin, ſo the band
Of ſerry'd heroes down the Malian ſteep,
Tremendous depth, the mix'd battalions ſwept
Of Thebes and Perſia. There no waters flow'd.
Abrupt and naked all was rock beneath.
Leonidas, incens'd, with grappling ſtrength
Daſh'd Anaxander on a pointed crag;

Compos'd, then gave new orders. At the word
His phalanx, wheeling, penetrates the pafs.
Aftoniſh'd Perſia ſtops in full career.
Ev'n Hyperanthes ſhrinks in wonder back.
Confuſion drives freſh numbers from the ſhore.
The Malian ooze o'erwhelms them. Sparta's king
Still preſſes forward, till an open breadth
Of fifty paces yields his front extent
To proffer battle. Hyperanthes ſoon
Recals his warriors, diſſipates their fears.
Swift on the great Leonidas a cloud
Of darts is ſhow'r'd. Th' encount'ring armies cloſe.
Who firſt, ſublimeſt hero, felt thy arm?
What rivers heard along their echoing banks
Thy name, in curſes ſounded from the lips
Of noble mothers, wailing for their ſons?
What towns with empty monuments were fill'd
For thoſe, whom thy unconquerable ſword
This day to vultures caſt? Firſt Beſſus died
A haughty ſatrap, whoſe tyrannic ſway
Deſpoil'd Hyrcania of her golden ſheaves,
And laid her foreſts waſte. For him the bees
Among the branches interwove their ſweets;
For him the fig was ripen'd, and the vine
In rich profuſion o'er the goblet foamed.
Then Dinis bled. On Hermus' ſide he reign'd;
He long aſſiduous, unavailing woo'd
The martial queen of Caria. She diſdain'd
A lover's ſoft complaint. Her rigid ear
Was fram'd to watch the tempeſt, while it rag'd,
Her eye accuſtom'd on the rolling deck
To brave the turgid billow. Near the ſhore
She now is preſent in her pinnace light.
The ſpectacle of glory crowds her breaſt
With diff'rent paſſions. Valiant, ſhe applauds
The Grecian valour; faithful, ſhe laments
Her ſad preſage of Perſia; prompts her ſon
To emulation of the Greeks in arms,
And of herſelf in loyalty. By fate

Is she reserv'd to signalize that day
Of future shame, when Xerxes must behold
The blood of nations overflow his decks,
And to their bottom tinge the briny floods
Of Salamis; whence she with Asia flies,
She only not inglorious. Low reclines
Her lover now, on Hermus to repeat
Her name no more, nor tell the vocal groves
His fruitless sorrows. Next Maduces fell,
A Paphlagonian. Born amid the sound
Of chasing surges, and the roar of winds,
He o'er th' inhospitable Euxine foam
Was wont from high Carambis' rock to ken
Ill-fated keels, which cut the Pontic stream,
Then with his dire associates through the deep
For spoil and slaughter guide his savage prow.
Him dogs will rend ashore. From Medus far,
Their native current, two bold brothers died,
Sisamnes and Tithraustes, potent lords
Of rich domains. On these Mithrines grey,
Cilician prince, Lilæus, who had left
The balmy fragrance of Arabia's fields
With Babylonian Tenagon expir'd.
The growing carnage Hyperanthes views
Indignant, fierce in vengeful ardour strides
Against the victor. Each his lance protends;
But Asia's numbers interpose their shields,
Solicitous to guard a prince rever'd:
Or thither fortune whelm'd the tide of war,
His term protracting for augmented fame.
So two proud vessels, lab'ring on the foam,
Present for battle their destructive beaks;
When ridgy seas, by hurricanes upturn,
In mountainous commotion dash between,
And either deck, in black'ning tempests veil'd,
Waft from its distant foe. More fiercely burn'd
Thy spirit, mighty Spartan. Such dismay
Relax'd thy foes, that each Barbarian heart
Resign'd all hopes of victory. The steeds

Of day were climbing their meridian height;
Continu'd shouts of onset from the pass
Resounded o'er the plain. Artuchus heard.
When first the spreading tumult had alarm'd
His distant quarter, starting from repose,
He down the valley of Spercheos rush'd
To aid his regal master. Asia's camp
He found the seat of terror and despair.
As in some fruitful clime, which late hath known
The rage of winds and floods, although the storm
Be heard no longer, and the deluge fled,
Still o'er the wasted region nature mourns
In melancholy silence; through the grove
With prostrate glories lie the stately oak,
Th' uprooted elm and beach; the plain is spread
With fragments, swept from villages o'erthrown,
Around the pastures flocks and herds are cast
In dreary piles of death: so Persia's host
In terror mute one boundless scene displays
Of devastation. Half-devour'd by fire,
Her tall pavilions, and her martial cars
Deform the wide encampment. Here in gore
Her princes welter, nameless thousands there,
Not victims all to Greeks. In gasping heaps
Barbarians, mangled by Barbarians, show'd
The wild confusion of that direful night;
When, wanting signals, and a leader's care,
They rush'd on mutual slaughter. Xerxes' tent
On its exalted summit, when the dawn
First streak'd the orient sky, was wont to bear
The golden form of Mithra, clos'd between
Two lucid crystals. This the gen'ral host
Observ'd, their awful signal to arrange
In arms complete, and numberless to watch
Their monarch's rising. This conspicuous blaze
Artuchus places in th' accustomed seat.
As, after winds have ruffled by a storm
The plumes of darkness, when her welcome face

The morning lifts ſerene, each wary ſwain
Collects his flock diſpers'd; the neighing ſteed,
The herds forſake their ſhelter: all return
To well-known paſtures, and frequented ſtreams:
So now this cheerful ſignal on the tent
Revives each leader. From inglorious flight
Their ſcatter'd bands they call, their wonted ground
Reſume, and hail Artuchus. From their ſwarms
A force he culls. Thermopylæ he ſeeks.
Fell ſhouts in horrid diſſonance precede.
His phalanx ſwift Leonidas commands
To circle backward from the Malian bay.
Their order changes. Now, half-orb'd, they ſtand
By Oeta's fence protected from behind,
With either flank united to the rock.
As by th' excelling architect diſpos'd
To ſhield ſome haven, a ſtupendous mole,
Fram'd of the grove and quarry's mingled ſtrength,
In ocean's boſom penetrates afar:
There, pride of art, immoveable it looks
On Eolus and Neptune; there defies
Thoſe potent gods combin'd: unyielding thus,
The Grecians ſtood a ſolid maſs of war
Againſt Artuchus, join'd with numbers new
To Hyperanthes. In the foremoſt rank
Leonidas his dreadful ſtation held.
Around him ſoon a ſpacious void was ſeen
By flight, or ſlaughter in the Perſian van.
In gen'rous ſhame and wrath Artuchus burns,
Diſcharging full at Lacedemon's chief
An iron-ſtudded mace. It glanc'd aſide,
Turn'd by the maſſy buckler. Prone to earth
The ſatrap fell. Alcander aim'd his point,
Which had transfix'd him proſtrate on the rock,
But for th' immediate ſuccour, he obtain'd
From faithful ſoldiers, lifting on their ſhields
A chief belov'd. Not ſuch Alcander's lot.
An arrow wounds his heart. Supine he lies,
The only Theban who to Greece preſerv'd

Unviolated faith. Phyſician ſage,
On pure Cithæron healing herbs to cull
Was he accuſtom'd, to expatiate o'er
The Heliconian paſtures, where no plants
Of poiſon ſpring, of juice ſalubrious all,
Which vipers, winding in their verdant track,
Drink and expel the venom from their tooth,
Dipt in the ſweetneſs of that ſoil divine.
On him the brave Artontes ſinks in death,
Renown'd through wide Bithynia, ne'er again
The clam'rous rites of Cybele to ſhare;
While echo murmurs through the hollow caves
Of Berecynthian Dindimus. The ſtrength
Of Alpheus ſent him to the ſhades of night.
Ere from the dead was diſengag'd the ſpear,
Huge Abradates, glorying in his might,
Surpaſſing all of Ciſſian race, advanc'd
To grapple; planting firm his foremoſt ſtep,
The victor's throat he graſp'd. At Nemea's games
The wreſtler's chaplet Alpheus had obtain'd.
He ſummons all his art. Oblique the ſtroke
Of his ſwift foot ſupplants the Perſian's heel.
He, falling, clings by Alpheus' neck, and drags
His foe upon him. In the Spartan's back
Enrag'd Barbarians fix their thronging ſpears.
To Abradates' cheſt the weapons paſs;
They rivet both in death. This Maron ſees,
This Polydorus, frowning. Victims, ſtrewn
Before their vengeance, hide their brother's corſe.
At length the gen'rous blood of Maron warms
The ſword of Hyperanthes. On the ſpear
Of Polydorus falls the pond'rous ax
Of Sacian Mardus. From the yielding wood
The ſteely point is ſever'd. Undiſmay'd,
The Spartan ſtoops to rear the knotted mace,
Left by Artuchus; but thy fatal blade,
Abrocomes, that dreadful inſtant watch'd
To rend his op'ning ſide. Unconquer'd ſtill,
Swift he diſcharges on the Sacian's front

A pond'rous blow, which burſt the ſcatter'd brain.
Down his own limbs meantime a torrent flows
Of vital crimſon. Smiling, he reflects
On ſorrow finith'd, on his Spartan name,
Renew'd in luſtre. Sudden to his ſide
Springs Dithyrambus. Through th' uplifted arm
Of Mindus, pointing a malignant dart
Againſt the dying Spartan, he impell'd
His ſpear. The point with violence unſpent,
Urg'd by ſuch vigour, reach'd the Perſian's throat,
Above his corſelet. Polydorus ſtretch'd
His languid hand to Theſpia's friendly youth,
Then bow'd his head in everlaſting peace.
While Mindus, waſted by his ſtreaming wound,
Beſide him faints and dies. In flow'ring prime
He, lord of Colchis, from a bride was torn
His tyrant's haſty mandate to obey.
She tow'rd the Euxine ſends her plaintive ſighs;
She woos in tender piety the winds:
Vain is their favour; they can never breathe
On his returning ſail. At once a crowd
Of eager Perſians ſeize the victor's ſpear.
One of his nervous hands retains it faſt.
The other bares his falchion. Wounds and death
He ſcatters round. Soſarmes feels his arm
Lopt from the ſhoulder. Zatis leaves entwin'd
His fingers round the long-diſputed lance.
On Mardon's reins deſcends the pond'rous blade,
Which half divides his body. Pheron ſtrides
Acroſs the pointed aſh. His weight o'ercomes
The weary'd Theſpian, who reſigns his hold;
But cleaves th' elate barbarian to the brain.
Abrocomes darts forward, ſhakes his ſteel,
Whoſe lightning threatens death. The wary Greek
Wards with his ſword the well directed ſtroke.
Then, cloſing, throws the Perſian. Now what aid
Of mortal force, or interpoſing heav'n
Preſerves the eaſtern hero? Lo! the friend
Of Teribazus. Eager to avenge

That lov'd, that loſt companion, and defend
A brother's life, beneath the ſinewy arm,
Outſtretch'd, the ſword of Hyperanthes paſs'd
Through Dithyrambus. All the ſtrings of life
At once relax; nor fame, nor Greece demand
More from his valour. Proſtrate now he lies
In glories, ripen'd on his blooming head.
Him ſhall the Theſpian maidens in their ſongs
Record once lovlieſt of the youthful train,
The gentle, wiſe, beneficent and brave,
Grace of his lineage, and his country's boaſt,
Now fall'n. Elyſium to his parting ſoul
Uncloſes. So the cedar, which ſupreme
Among the groves of Libanus hath tow'r'd,
Uprooted, low'rs his graceful top, preferr'd
For dignity of growth ſome royal dome,
Or heav'n devoted fabric to adorn.
Diomeden burſts forward. Round his friend
He heaps deſtruction. Troops of wailing ghoſts
Attend thy ſhade, fall'n hero! Long prevail'd
His furious arm in vengeance uncontroll'd;
Till four Aſſyrians on his ſhelving ſpear,
Ere from a Caſſian's proſtrate body freed,
Their pond'rous maces all diſcharge. It broke.
Still with a ſhatter'd truncheon he maintains
Unequal fight. Impetuous through his eye
The well-aim'd fragment penetrates the brain
Of one bold warrior; there the ſplinter'd wood,
Inſix'd, remains. The hero laſt unſheaths
His falchion broad. A ſecond ſees aghaſt
His entrails open'd. Sever'd from a third,
The head, ſteel cas'd deſcends. In blood is roll'd
The grizly beard. That effort breaks the blade
Short from its hilt. The Grecian ſtands diſarm'd.
The fourth, Aſtaſpes, proud Chaldean lord,
Is nigh. He lifts his iron-plated mace.
This, while a cluſter of auxiliar fiends
Hang on the Grecian ſhield, to earth depreſs'd,
Loads with unerring blows the batter'd helm;

Till on the ground Diomedon extends
His mighty limbs. So waken'd by the force
Of ſome tremendous engine, which the hand
Of Mars impels, a citadel, high-tow'r'd,
Whence darts, and fire, and ruins, long have aw'd
Begirding legions, yields at laſt, and ſpreads
Its diſuniting ramparts on the ground;
Joy fills th' aſſailants, and the battle's tide
Whelms o'er the widening breach: the Perſian thus
O'er the late-fear'd Diomedon advanc'd
Againſt the Grecian remnant: when behold
Leonidas. At once their ardour froze.
He had awhile behind his friends retir'd,
Oppreſs'd by labour. Pointleſs was his ſpear,
His buckler cleft. As, overworn by ſtorms,
A veſſel ſteers to ſome protecting bay;
Then, ſoon as timely gales inviting, curl
The azure floods, to Neptune ſhows again
Her maſts apparell'd freſh in ſhrowds and ſails,
Which court the vig'rous wind: So Sparta's king,
In ſtrength repair'd, a ſpear and buckler new
Preſents to Aſia. From her bleeding ranks
Hydarnes, urg'd by deſtiny, approach'd.
He, proudly vaunting, left an infant race,
A ſpouſe lamenting on the diſtant verge
Of Bactrian Ochus. Victory in vain
He, parting, promis'd. Wanton hope will ſport
Round his cold heart no longer. Grecian ſpoils,
Imagin'd triumphs, pictur'd on his mind,
Fate will eraſe for ever. Through the targe,
The thick-mail'd corſelet his divided cheſt
Of bony ſtrength admits the hoſtile ſpear.
Leonidas draws back the ſteely point,
Bent and enfeebled by the forceful blow.
Meantime within his buckler's rim unſeen,
Amphiſteus ſtealing, in th' unguarded flank
His dagger ſtruck. In ſlow effuſion ooz'd
The blood, from Hercules deriv'd; but death
Not yet had reach'd his mark. Th' indignant king

Gripes irresistibly the Persian's throat.
He drags him prostrate. False, corrupt, and base,
Fallacious, fell, pre-eminent was he
Among tyrannic satraps. Phrygia pin'd
Beneath th' oppression of his ruthless sway.
Her soil had once been fruitful. Once her towns
Were populous and rich. The direful change
To naked fields and crumbling roofs declar'd
Th' accurs'd Amphistreus govern'd. As the spear
Of Tyrian Cadmus riveted to earth
The pois'nous dragon, whose infectious breath
Had blasted all Bœotia; so the king,
On prone Amphistreus trampling, to the rock
Nails down the tyrant, and the fractur'd staff
Leaves in his panting body. But the blood,
Great hero, dropping from thy wound, revives
The hopes of Persia. Thy unyielding arm
Upholds the conflict still. Against thy shield
The various weapons shiver, and thy feet
With glitt'ring points surround. The Lydian sword,
The Persian dagger leave their shatter'd hilts;
Bent is the Caspian scimitar: the lance,
The javelin, dart, and arrow all combine
Their fruitless efforts. From Alcides sprung,
Thou stand'st unshaken like a Thracian hill,
Like Rhodope, or Hæmus; where in vain
The thund'rer plants his livid bolts in vain
Keen pointed lightnings pierce th' incrusted snow;
And winter, beating with eternal war,
Shakes from his dreary wings discordant storms,
Chill sleet, and clatt'ring hail. Advancing bold,
His rapid lance Abrocomes in vain
Aims at the forehead of Laconia's chief.
He, not unguarded, rears his active blade
Athwart the dang'rous blow, whose fury wastes
Above his crest in air. Then swiftly wheel'd,
The pond'rous weapon cleaves the Persian's knee
Sheer through the parted bone. He sidelong falls.

Cruſh'd on the ground beneath contending feet,
Great Xerxes' brother yields the laſt remains
Of tortur'd life. Leonidas perſiſts;
Till Agis calls Dieneces, alarms
Demophilus, Megiſtias: they o'er piles
Of Allarodian and Saſperian dead
Haſte to their leader: They before him raiſe
The brazen bulwark of their maſſy ſhields.
The foremoſt rank of Aſia ſtands and bleeds;
The reſt recoil: but Hyperanthes ſwift
From band to band his various hoſt pervades,
Their drooping hopes rekindles, in the brave
New fortitude excites: the frigid heart
Of fears he warms. Aſtaſpes firſt obeys.
Vain of his birth, from ancient Belus drawn,
Proud of his wealthy ſtores, his ſtately domes,
More proud in recent victory: his might
Had foil'd Platæ's chief. Before the front
He ſtrides impetuous. His triumphant mace
Againſt the brave Dieneces he bends.
The weighty blow bears down th' oppoſing ſhield.
And breaks the Spartan's ſhoulder. Idle hangs
The weak defence, and loads th' inactive arm.
Depriv'd of every function. Agis bares
His vengeful blade. At two well level'd ſtrokes
Of both his hands, high brandiſhing the mace,
He mutilates the foe. A Sacian chief
Springs on the victor. Jaxartes' banks
To this brave ſavage gave his name and birth.
His look erect, his bold deportment ſpoke
A gallant ſpirit, but untam'd by laws,
With dreary wilds familiar, and a race
Of rude barbarians, horrid, as their clime.
From its direction glanc'd the Spartan ſpear,
Which, upward borne, o'erturned his iron cone.
Black o'er his forehead fall the naked locks;
They aggravate his fury: while his foe
Repeats the ſtroke, and penetrates his cheſt,
The intrepid Sacian through his breaſt and back

Receives the girding ſteel. Along the ſtaff
He writhes his tortur'd body; in his graſp
A barbed arrow from his quiver ſhakes;
Deep in the ſtreaming throat of Agis hides
The deadly point; then grimly ſmiles and dies.
From him fate haſtens to a nobler prey.
Dieneces. His undefended frame
The ſhield abandons, ſliding from his arm.
His breaſt is gor'd by javelins. On the foe
He hurls them back, extracted from his wounds.
Life, yielding ſlow to deſtiny, at length
Forſakes his riven heart; nor leſs in death
Thermopylæ he graces, than before
By martial deeds and conduct. What can ſtem
The barb'rous torrent? Agis bleeds. His ſpear
Lies uſeleſs, irrecoverably plung'd
In Jaxares' body. Low reclines
Dieneces. Leonidas himſelf,
O'erlabour'd, wounded with his dinted ſword
The rage of war can exerciſe no more.
One laſt, one glorious effort age performs.
Demophilus, Megiſtias join their might.
They check the tide of conqueſt; while the ſpear
Of ſlain Dieneces to Sparta's chief
The fainting Agis bears. The pointed aſh.
In that dire hand for battle rear'd anew,
Blaſts ev'ry Perſian's valour. Back in heaps
They roll confounded, by their gen'ral's voice
In vain exhorted longer to endure
The ceaſeleſs waſte of that unconquer'd arm.
So, when the giants from Olympus chas'd
Th' inferior gods, themſelves in terror ſhunn'd
Th' inceſſant ſtreams of lightning, where the hand
Of heav'ns great father with eternal might
Suſtain'd the dreadful conflict. O'er the field
Awhile Bellona gives the battle reſt;
When Theſpia's leader and Megiſtias drop
At either ſide of Lacedemon's king.
Beneath the weight of years and labour bend

The hoary warriors. Not a groan moleſts
Their parting ſpirits; but in death's calm night
All ſilent ſinks each venerable head:
Like aged oaks, whoſe deep-deſcending roots
Had pierc'd reſiſtleſs through a craggy ſlope;
There during three long centuries have brav'd
Malignant Eurus, and the boiſterous north;
Till bare and ſapleſs by corroding time
Without a blaſt their moſſy trunks recline
Before their parent hill. Not one remains,
But Agis, near Leonidas, whoſe hand
The laſt kind office to his friend performs,
Extracts the Scian's arrow. Life, releas'd
Pours forth in crimſon floods. O Agis, pale
Thy placid features, rigid are thy limbs;
They loſe their graces. Dimm'd, thy eyes reveal
The native goodneſs of thy heart no more.
Yet other graces ſpring. The nobler corſe
Leonidas ſurveys. A pauſe he finds
To mark, how lovely are the patriot's wounds,
And ſee thoſe honours on the breaſt he lov'd.
But Hyperanthes from the trembling ranks
Of Aſia tow'rs, inflexibly reſolv'd
The Perſian glory to redeem, or fall.
The Spartan, worn by toil, his languid arm
Uplifts once more. He waits the dauntleſs prince.
The heroes ſtand adverſe. Each awhile
Reſtrains his valour. Each, admiring, view
His godlike foe. At length their brandiſh'd points
Provoke the conteſt, fated ſoon to cloſe
The long-continu'd horrors of the day.
Fix'd in amaze and fear, the Aſian throng,
Unmov'd and ſilent on their bucklers pauſe.
Thus on the waſtes of India, while the earth
Beneath him groans, the elephant is ſeen,
His huge proboſcis writhing, to defy
The ſtrong rhinoceros, whoſe pond'rous horn
Is newly whetted on a rock. Anon
Each hideous bulk encounters. Earth her groan

Redoubles. Trembling, from their covert gaze
The savage inmates of surrounding woods
In distant terror. By the vary'd art
Of either chief the dubious combat long
Its great event retarded. Now his lance
Far through the hostile shield Laconia's king
Impell'd. Aside the Persian swung his arm.
Beneath it pass'd the weapon, which his targe
Encumber'd. Hopes of conquest and renown
Elate his courage. Sudden he directs
His rapid javelin to the Spartan's throat.
But he his wary buckler upward rais'd,
Which o'er his shoulder turn'd the glancing steel;
For one last effort then his scatter'd strength
Collecting, levell'd with resistless force,
The massive orb, and dash'd its brazen verge
Full on the Persian's forehead. Down he sunk,
Without a groan expiring, as o'erwhelm'd
Beneath a marble fragment, from his seat
Heav'd by a whirlwind, sweeping o'er the ridge
Of some aspiring mansion. Gen'rous prince!
What could his valour more? His single might
He match'd with great Leonidas, and fell
Before his native bands. The Spartan king
Now stands alone. In heaps his slaughter'd friends,
All stretch'd around him lie. The distant foes
Show'r on his head innumerable darts.
From various sluices gush the vital floods;
They stain his fainting limbs. Nor yet with pain
His brow is clouded; but those beauteous wounds,
The sacred pledges of his own renown,
And Sparta's safety, in sereneſt joy
His closing eye contemplates. Fame can twine
No brighter laurels round his glorious head;
His virtue more to labour fate forbids,
And lays him now in honourable rest
To seal his country's liberty by death.

MISCELLANIES.

POEM ON SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

TO Newton's genius and immortal fame,
Th'advent'rous muſe with trembling pinions ſoars.
Thou heav'nly truth, from thy ſeraphic throne
Look favourable down, do thou aſſiſt
My lab'ring thought, do thou inſpire my ſong.
Newton, who firſt th' Almighty's works diſplay'd,
And ſmooth'd that mirror, in whoſe poliſh'd face
The great Creator now conſpicuous ſhines;
Who open'd nature's adamantine gates,
And to our minds her ſecret powers expos'd;
Newton demands the muſe; his ſacred hand
Shall guide her infant ſteps; his ſacred hand
Shall raiſe her to the Heliconian height,
Where, on its lofty top enthron'd, her head
Shall mingle with the ſtars. Hail nature, hail,
O goddeſs, handmaid of th' ethereal power,
Now lift thy head, and to th' admiring world
Show thy long hidden beauty. Thee the wiſe
Of ancient fame, immortal Plato's ſelf,
The Stagyrite, and Syracuſian ſage,
From black obſcurity's abyſs to raiſe,
(Drooping and mourning o'er thy wondrous works)
With vain inquiry ſought. Like meteors theſe
In their dark age bright ſons of wiſdom ſhone:
But at thy Newton all their laurels fade,
They ſhrink from all the honours of their names.
So glimm'ring ſtars contract their feeble rays,
When the ſwift luſtre of Aurora's face
Flows o'er the ſkies, and wraps the heav'ns in light.
The Deity's omnipotence, the cauſe,
Th' original of things long lay unknown.
Alone the beauties prominent to ſight
(Of the celeſtial power the outward form)
Drew praiſe and wonder from the gazing world.

As when the deluge overſpread the earth,
Whilſt yet the mountains only rear'd their heads
Above the ſurface of the wild expanſe,
Whelm'd deep below the great foundations lay,
Till ſome kind angel at heav'n's high command
Roll'd back the riſing tides, and haughty floods,
And to the ocean thunder'd out his voice:
Quick all the ſwelling and imperious waves,
The foaming billows and obſcuring ſurge,
Back to their channels and their ancient ſeats
Recoil affrighted: from the darkſome main
Earth raiſes ſmiling, as new-born, her head,
And with freſh charms her lovely face arrays.
So his extenſive thought accompliſh'd firſt
The mighty taſk to drive th' obſtructing miſts
Of ignorance away, beneath whoſe gloom
Th' unſhrouded majeſty of nature lay.
He drew the veil and ſwell'd the ſpreading ſcene.
How had the moon around th' ethereal void
Rang'd, and eluded lab'ring mortals care,
Till his invention trac'd her ſecret ſteps,
While ſhe inconſtant with unſteady rein
Through endleſs mazes and meanders guides
In its unequal courſe her changing car:
Whether behind the ſun's ſuperior light
She hides the beauties of her radiant face,
Or, when conſpicuous, ſmiles upon mankind,
Unveiling all her night-rejoicing charms.
When thus the ſilver-treſſed moon diſpels
The frowning horrors from the brow of night,
And with her ſplendours cheers the ſullen gloom,
While ſable-mantled darkneſs with his veil
The viſage of the fair horizon ſhades,
And over nature ſpreads his raven wings;
Let me upon ſome unfrequented green
While ſleep ſits heavy on the drowſy world,
Seek out ſome ſolitary peaceful cell,
Where darkſome woods around their gloomy brows
Bow low, and ev'ry hill's protended ſhade

Obſcures the duſky vale, there ſilent dwell,
Where contemplation holds its ſtill abode,
There trace the wide and pathleſs void of heav'n,
And count the ſtars that ſparkle on its robe,
Or elſe in fancy's wild'ring mazes loſt
Upon the verdure ſee the fairy elves
Dance o'er their magic circles, or behold,
In thought enraptur'd with the ancient bards,
Medea's baleful incantations draw
Down from her orb the paly queen of night.
But chiefly Newton let me ſoar with thee,
And while ſurveying all yon ſtarry vault
With admiration I attentive gaze,
Thou ſhalt deſcend from thy celeſtial ſeat,
And waft aloft my high-aſpiring mind,
Shalt ſhow me there how nature has ordain'd
Her fundamental laws, ſhalt lead my thought
Through all the wand'rings of th' uncertain moon,
And teach me all her operating powers.
She and the ſun with influence conjoint
Wield the huge axle of the whirling earth,
And from their juſt direction turn the poles,
Slow urging on the progreſs of the years.
The conſtellations ſeem to leave their ſeats,
And o'er the ſkies with ſolemn pace to move.
You, ſplendid rulers of the day and night,
The ſea's obey, at your reſiſtleſs ſway
Now they contract their waters, and expoſe
The dreary deſert of old ocean's reign.
The craggy rocks their horrid ſides diſcloſe;
Trembling the ſailor views the dreadful ſcene,
And cautiouſly the threat'ning ruin ſhuns.
But where the ſhallow waters hide the ſands,
There ravenous deſtruction lurks conceal'd,
There the ill-guided veſſel falls a prey,
And all her numbers gorge his greedy jaws.
But quick returning ſee th' impetuous tides
Back to th' abandon'd ſhores impel the main.
Again the foaming ſeas extend their waves.

Again the rolling floods embrace the shores,
And veil the horrors of the empty deep.
Thus the obsequious seas your power confess,
While from the surface healthful vapours rise,
Plenteous throughout the atmosphere diffus'd,
Or to supply the mountain's heads with springs,
Or fill the hanging clouds with needful rains,
That friendly streams, and kind refreshing show'rs,
May gently lave the sun-burnt thirsty plains,
Or to repleniſh all the empty air
With wholesome moisture to increase the fruits
Of earth, and bless the labours of mankind.
O Newton, whither flies thy mighty soul,
How shall the feeble muse pursue through all
The vast extent of thy unbounded thought,
That even seeks th' unseen recesses dark
To penetrate of Providence immense.
And thou the great Dispenser of the world
Propitious, who with inspiration taught'ſt
Our greatest bard to send thy praises forth;
Thou, who gav'ſt Newton thought; who smil'dſt serene,
When to its bounds he stretch'd his swelling soul;
Who still benignant ever blest his toil,
And deign'd to his enlight'ned mind t' appear
Confess'd around th' interminated world:
To me, O thy divine infusion grant
(O thou in all so infinitely good)
That I may sing thy everlasting works,
Thy unexhausted store of providence,
In thought effulgent and resounding verse,
O could I spread the wond'rous theme around,
Where the wind cools the oriental world,
To the calm breezes of the Zephyr's breath,
To where the frozen hyperborean blasts,
To where th' boist'rous tempest-leading south
From their deep hollow caves send forth their storms.
Thou still indulgent Parent of mankind,
Lest humid emanations should no more

Flow from the ocean, but diſſolve away
Through the long ſeries of revolving time;
And leſt the vital principle decay,
By which the air ſupplies the ſprings of life;
Thou haſt the fiery viſag'd comets form'd
With vivifying ſpirits all replete
Which they abundant breathe about the void,
Renewing the prolific ſoul of things.
No longer now on thee amaz'd we call,
No longer tremble at imagin'd ills,
When comets blaze tremendous from on high,
Or when extending wide their flaming trains
With hideous graſp the ſkies engirdle round,
And ſpread the terrors of their burning locks.
For theſe through orbits in the length'ning ſpace
Of many tedious rolling years complete
Around the ſun move regularly on;
And with the planets in harmonious orbs,
And myſtic periods their obeiſance pay
To him majeſtic Ruler of the ſkies
Upon his throne of circled glory fixt.
He or ſome god conſpicuous to the view,
Or elſe the ſubſtitute of nature ſeems,
Guiding the courſes of revolving worlds.
He taught great Newton the all-potent laws
Of gravitation, by whoſe ſimple power
The univerſe exiſts. Nor here the ſage
Big with invention ſtill renewing ſtaid.
But, O bright angel of the lamp of day,
How ſhall the muſe diſplay his greateſt toil?
Let her plunge deep in Aganippe's waves,
Or in Caſtalia's ever flowing ſtream,
That reinſpired ſhe may ſing to thee,
How Newton dar'd advent'rous to unbraid
The yellow treſſes of thy ſhining hair.
Or did'ſt thou gracious leave thy radiant ſphere,
And to his hand thy lucid ſplendours give,
T' unweave the light-diffuſing wreath, and part
The blended glories of thy golden plumes?

He with laborious and unerring care
How diff'rent and imbodied colours form
Thy piercing light, with juſt diſtinction found.
He with quick ſight purſu'd thy darting rays,
When penetrating to th' obſcure receſs
Of ſolid matter, there perſpicuous ſaw,
How in the texture of each body lay
The power that ſeparates the diff'rent beams.
Hence over nature's unadorned face
Thy bright diverſifying rays dilate
Their various hues: and hence when vernal rains
Deſcending ſwift have burſt the low'ring clouds,
Thy ſplendours through the diſſipating miſts
In its fair veſture of unnumber'd hues
Array the ſhow'ry bow. At thy approach
The morning riſen from her pearly couch
With roſy bluſhes decks her virgin cheek;
The ev'ning on the frontiſpiece of heav'n
His mantle ſpreads with many colours gay;
The mid-day ſkies in radiant azure clad,
The ſhining clouds. And ſilver vapours rob'd,
In white tranſparent intermixt with gold,
With bright variety of ſplendour clothe
All the illuminated face above.
When hoary-headed winter back retires
To thee chill'd pole, there ſolitary ſits
Encompaſs'd round with winds and tempeſts bleak
In caverns of impenetrable ice,
And from behind the diſſipated gloom
Like a new Venus from the parting ſurge
The gay-apparell'd ſpring advances on;
When thou in thy meridian brightneſs ſitt'ſt,
And from thy throne pure emanations flow
Of glory burſting o'er the radiant ſkies:
Then let the muſe Olympus' top aſcend,
And o'er Theſſali's plain extend her view,
And count, O Tempe, all thy beauties o'er.
Mountains, whoſe ſummits graſp the pendant clouds,
Between their wood-invelop'd ſlopes embrace

The green attired vallies. Every flow'r
Here in the pride of bounteous nature clad
Smiles on the boſom of th' enamell'd meads.
Over the ſmiling lawn the ſilver floods
Of fair Peneus gently roll along,
While the reflected colours from the flow'rs,
And verdant borders pierce the limpid waves,
And paint with all their variegated hue
The yellow ſands beneath. Smooth gliding on
The waters haſten to the neighbouring ſea.
Still the pleas'd eye the floating plain purſues
At length, in Nepture's wide dominion loſt
Surveys the ſhining billows, that ariſe
Apparell'd each in Phœbus' bright attire:
Or from afar ſome tall majeſtic ſhip,
Or the long hoſtile lines of threat'ning fleets.
Which o'er the bright uneven mirror ſweep,
In dazzling gold and waving purple deck'd;
Such as of old, when haughty Athens pour
Their hideous front and terrible array
Againſt Pallene's coaſt extended wide,
And with tremendous war and battle ſtern
The trembling walls of Potidæa ſhook.
Creſted with pendants curling with the breeze
The upright maſts high briſtle in the air,
Aloft exalting proud their gilded heads.
The ſilver waves againſt the painted prows
Raiſe their reſplendent boſoms, and impearl
The fair vermillion with their gliſt'ring drops:
And from on board the iron-clothed hoſt
Around the main a gleaming horror caſts;
Each flaming buckler like the mid day ſun,
Each plumed helmet like the ſilver moon,
Each moving gauntlet like the lightning's blaze,
And like a ſtar each brazen pointed ſpear.
But, lo! the ſacred high-erected fanes,
Fair citadels, and marble-crowned towers,
And ſumptuous palaces of ſtately towns
Magnificent ariſe, upon their heads

Bearing on high a wreath of ſilver light.
But ſee my muſe the high Pierian hill,
Behold its ſhaggy locks and airy top,
Up to the ſkies th' imperious mountain heaves;
The ſhining verdure of the nodding woods.
See where the ſilver Hippocrene flows,
Behold its glitt'ring rivulet and rill
Through mazes wander down the green deſcent,
And ſparkle through the interwoven trees,
Here reſt a while and humble hómage pay,
Here, where the ſacred genius, that inſpir'd
Sublime Mæonides and Pindar's breaſt,
His habitation once was fam'd to hold.
Here thou, O Homer, offer'dſt up thy vows;
Thee, the kind muſe Calliopæa heard,
And led thee to the empyrean ſeats,
There manifeſted to the hallow'd eyes
The deeds of gods; thee wiſe Minerva taught
The wondrous art of knowing human kind;
Harmonious Phœbus tun'd thy heav'nly mind,
And ſwell'd to rapture each exalted ſenſe;
Even Mars the dreadful battle-ruling god,
Mars taught thee war, and with his bloody hand
Inſtructed thine, when in thy ſounding lines
We hear the rattling of Bellona's car,
The yell of diſcord, and the din of arms.
Pindar, when mounted on his fiery ſteed,
Soars to the ſun oppoſing eagle-like
His eyes undazzled to the fierceſt rays.
He, firmly ſeated, not like Glaucus' ſon,
Strides his ſwift-winged and fire breathing horſe,
And borne aloft ſtrikes with his ringing hooſs
The brazen vault of heav'n, ſuperior there
Looks down upon the ſtars, whoſe radiant light
Illuminates innumerable worlds,
That through eternal orbits roll beneath.
But thou all hail immortalized ſon.
Of harmony all hail thou Thracian bard,
To whom Apollo gave his tuneful lyre!

O might'ſt thou, Orpheus, now again revive,
And Newton ſhould inform thy liſt'ning ear
How the ſoft notes, and ſoul-inchanting ſtrains
Of thy own lyre were on the wind convey'd,
He taught the muſe, how ſound progreſſive floats
Upon the waving particles of air,
When harmony in ever pleaſing ſtrains,
Melodious melting at each lulling fall,
With ſoft alluring penetration ſteals
Through the enraptur'd ear to inmoſt thought,
And folds the ſenſes in its ſilken bands.
So the ſweet muſic, which from Orpheus' touch
And fam'd Amphion's, on the ſounding ſtring
Aroſe harmonious, gliding on the air,
Pierc'd the tough bark'd and knotty-ribbed woods,
Into their ſaps ſoft inſpiration breath'd,
And taught attention to the ſtubborn oak.
Thus when great Henry, and brave Marlb'rough led
Th' embattled numbers of Britannia's ſons,
The trump, that ſwells th' expanded cheek of fame,
That adds new vigour to the gen'rous youth,
And rouſes ſluggiſh cowardice itſelf
The trumpet with its Mars-inciting voice
The winds broad breaſt impetuous ſweeping o'er
Fill'd the big note of war. Th' inſpired hoſt
With new-born ardour preſs the trembling Gaul;
Nor greater throngs had reach'd eternal night,
Not if the fields of Agincourt had yawn'd,
Expoſing horrible the gulf of fate;
Or roaring Danube ſpread his arms abroad,
And overwhelm'd their legions with his floods.
But let the wond'ring muſe at length return;
Nor yet, angelic genius of the ſun,
In worthy lays her high-attempting ſong
Has blazon forth thy venerated name.
Then let her ſweep the loud-ſounding lyre
Again, again o'er each melodious ſtring
Teach harmony to tremble with thy praiſe.
And ſtill thine ear, O favourable grant,

And ſhe ſhall tell thee, that whatever charms,
Whatever beauties bloom on nature's face
Proceed from thy all-influencing light.
That when ariſing with tempeſtuous rage,
The north impetuous rides upon the clouds
Diſperſing round the heav'ns obſtructive gloom,
And with his dreaded prohibition ſtays
The kind effuſion of thy genial beams;
Pale are the rubies on Aurora's lips,
No more the roſes bluſh upon her cheeks,
Black are Peneus' ſtreams and golden ſands,
In Tempe's vale dull Melancholy ſits,
And every flower reclines its languid head.
By what high names ſhall I invoke thee, ſay,
Thou life-infuſing deity, on thee
I call, and look propitious from on high,
While now to thee I offer up my prayer.
O had great Newton, as he found the cauſe,
By which ſound rolls through th' undulating air,
O had he, baffling time's reſiſtleſs power;
Diſcover'd what that ſubtle ſpirit is,
Or whatſoe'er diffuſive elſe is ſpread
Over the wide extended univerſe,
Which cauſes bodies to reflect the light,
And from their ſtraight direction to divert
The rapid beams, that through their ſurface pierce,
But ſince embrac'd by th' icy arms of age,
And his quick thought by time's cold hand congeal'd,
Ev'n Newton left unknown this hidden power;
Thou from the race of human kind ſelect
Some other worthy of an angel's care,
With inſpiration animate his breaſt.
And him inſtruct in theſe thy ſecret laws.
O let not Newton, to whoſe ſpacious view,
Now unobſtructed, all th' extenſive ſcenes
Of the ethereal ruler's works ariſe;
When he beholds this earth he late adorn'd,
Let him not ſee philoſophy in tears,
Like a fond mother ſolitary ſit,

Lamenting him her dear, and only child.
But as the wise Pythagoras, and he,
Whose birth with pride the fam'd Abdera boasts,
With expectation having long survey'd
This spot their ancient seat, with joy beheld
Divine Philosophy at length appear
In all her charms majestically fair,
Conducted by immortal Newton's hand:
So may he see another sage arise,
That shall maintain her empire: then no more
Imperious ignorance with haughty sway
Shall stalk rapacious o'er the ravag'd globe:
Then thou, O Newton, shalt protect these lines,
The humble tribute of the grateful muse;
Ne'er shall the sacrilegious hand despoil
Her laurell'd temples, whom his name preserves.
And were she equal to the mighty theme.
Futurity should wonder at her song:
Time should receive her with extended arms,
Seat her conspicuous in his rolling car,
And bear her down to his extremest bound.
Fables with wonder tell how Terra's sons
With iron force unloos'd the stubborn nerves
Of hills, and on the cloud-inshrouded top
Of Pelion Ossa pil'd. But if the vast
Gigantic deeds of savage strength demand
Astonishment from men, what then shalt thou,
O what expressive rapture of the soul,
When thou before us, Newton, dost display
The labours of thy great excelling mind;
When thou unveilest all the wondrous scene,
The vast idea of th' eternal King,
Not dreadful bearing in his angry arm
The thunder hanging o'er our trembling heads;
But with th' effulgency of love replete,
And clad with power, which form'd th' extensive heavens.
O happy he, whose enterprising hand
Unbars the golden and relucid gates

Of th' empyrean dome, where thou enthron'd
Philoſophy art ſealed. Thou ſuſtain'd
By the firm hand of everlaſting truth
Deſpiſeſt all the injuries of time:
Thou never know'ſt decay when all around,
Antiquity obſcures her head. Behold
Th' Egyptian towers, the Babylonian walls,
And Thebes with all her hundred gates of braſs,
Behold them ſcatter'd like the duſt abroad.
Whatever now is flouriſhing and proud,
Whatever ſhall, muſt know devouring age.
Euphrates' ſtream, and ſeven-mouthed Nile,
And Danube, thou that from Germania's ſoil
To the black Euxine's far remoted ſhore,
O'er the wide bounds of mighty nations ſweep'ſt
In thunder loud thy rapid floods along.
E'en you ſhall feel inexorable time;
To you the fatal day ſhall come; no more
Your torrents then ſhall ſhake the trembling ground,
No longer then to inundations ſwol'n
Th' imperious waves the fertile paſtures drench,
But ſhrunk within a narrow channel glide;
Or through the year's reiterated courſe,
When Time himſelf grows old, your wond'rous ſtreams
Loſt e'en to memory ſhall lie unknown
Beneath obſcurity, and chaos whelm'd.
But ſtill thou ſun illuminateſt all
The azure regions round, thou guideſt ſtill
The orbits of the planetary ſpheres:
The moon ſtill wanders o'er her changing courſe,
And ſtill, O Newton, ſhall thy name ſurvive
As long as nature's hand directs the world,
When ev'ry dark obſtruction ſhall retire,
And ev'ry ſecret yield its hidden ſtore,
Which thee dim-ſighted age forbade to ſee,
Age that alone could ſtay thy riſing ſoul,
And could mankind among the fixed ſtars,
E'en to th' extremeſt bounds to knowledge reach

To thoſe unknown innumerable ſuns,
Whoſe light but glimmers from thoſe diſtant worlds
Ev'n to thoſe utmoſt boundaries, thoſe bars
That ſhut the entrance of th' illumin'd ſpace
Where angels only tread the vaſt unknown
Thou ever ſhould'ſt be ſeen immortal there
In each new ſphere, each new-appearing ſun,
In fartheſt regions at the very verge
Of the wide univerſe ſhoul'dſt thou be ſeen
And lo! th' all-potent goddeſs nature takes
With her own hand thy great, thy juſt reward
Of immortality; aloft in air
See ſhe diſplays, and with eternal graſp,
Uprears the trophies of great Newton's fame.

LONDON:

OR, THE PROGRESS OF COMMERCE.

YE northern blasts, and (*a*) Eurus wont to sweep
With rudest pinions o'er the furrow'd waves,
A while suspend your violence, and waft
From sandy (*b*) Weser and the broad mouth'd Elbe
My freighted vessels to the destin'd shore.
Safe o'er th' unruffled main; let every thought,
Which may disquiet, and alarm my breast,
Be absent now; that, dispossess'd of care,
And free from ev'ry tumult of the mind,
With each disturbing passion hush'd to peace,
I may pour all my spirit on the theme,
Which opens now before me, and demands
The loftiest strain. The eagle, when he tow'rs
Beyond the clouds, the fleecy robes of heav'n,
Disdains all objects but the golden sun;
Full on th' effulgent orb directs his eye,
And sails exulting through the blaze of day;
So, while her wing attempts the boldest flight,
Rejecting each inferior theme of praise,
Thee, ornament of Europe, Albion's pride,
Fair seat of wealth and freedom, thee my muse
Shall celebrate, O London: thee she hails.
Thou lov'd abode of commerce, last retreat,
Whence she contemplates with a tranquil mind
Her various wanderings from the fated hour,
That she abandon'd her maternal clime;
Neptunian commerce, whom Phœnice bore,
Illustrious nymph, that nam'd the fertile plains
Along the sounding main extended far,
Which flowery Carmel with its sweet perfumes,
And with its cedars Libanus o'ershades:
Her from the bottom of the wat'ry world,
As once she stood, in radiant beauties grac'd,
To mark the heaving tide, the piercing eye

(*a*) The east wind.
(*b*) Bremen is situated on the Weser, and Hamburgh on the Elbe.

Of Neptune view'd enamour'd: from the deep
The god aſcending ruſhes to the beach,
And claſps the affrighted virgin. From that day,
Soon as the paly regent of the night
Nine times her monthly progreſs had renew'd
Through heaven's illumin'd vault, Phœnice, led
By ſhame, once more the ſea-worn margin ſought:
There pac'd with painful ſteps the barren ſands,
A ſolitary mourner, and the ſurge,
Which gently roll'd beſide her, now no more
With placid eyes beholding, thus exclaim'd:
Ye fragrant ſhrubs and cedars, lofty ſhade,
Which crown my native hills, ye ſpreading palms,
That riſe majeſtic on theſe fruitful meads,
With you who gave the loſt Phœnice birth,
And you, who bear th' endearing name of friends,
Once faithful partners of my chaſter hours,
Farewel! To thee, perfidious god, I come,
Bent down with pain and anguiſh on thy ſands,
I come thy ſuppliant: death is all I crave;
Bid thy devouring wares inwrap my head,
And to the bottom whelm my cares and ſhame!
She ceas'd, when ſudden from th' encloſing deep
A cryſtal car emerg'd, with glitt'ring ſhells,
Cull'd from their oozy beds by Tethys' train,
And bluſhing coral deck'd, whoſe ruddy glow
Mix'd with the wat'ry luſtre of the pearl.
A ſmiling band of ſea born nymphs attend,
Who from the ſhore with gentle hands convey
The fear-ſubdu'd Phœnice, and along
The lucid chariot place. As there with dread
All mute, and ſtruggling with her painful throes,
She lay, the winds by Neptune's high command
Were ſilent round her; not a zephyr dar'd
To wanton o'er the cedar's branching top.
Nor on the plain the ſtately palm was ſeen
To wave its graceful verdure; o'er the main
No undulation broke the ſmooth expanſe,
But all was huſh'd and motionleſs around,

All but the lightly-ſliding car, impell'd
Along the level azure by the ſtrength
Of active Tritons, rivalling in ſpeed
The rapid meteor, whoſe ſulphureous train
Glides o'er the brow of darkneſs, and appears
The livid ruins of a falling ſtar.
Beneath the Lybian ſkies, a bliſsful iſle,
By (c) Triton's floods encircled, Nyſa lay.
Here youthful nature wanton'd in delights,
And here the guardians of the bounteous horn,
While it was now the infancy of time,
Nor yet th' uncultivated globe had learn'd
To ſmile, (d) Eucarpé, (e) Dapſiléa dwelt,
With all the nymphs, whoſe ſacred care had nurs'd
The eldeſt Bacchus. From the flow'ry ſhore
A turf-clad valley opens, and along
Its verdure mild the willing feet allures;
While on its ſloping ſides aſcends the pride
Of hoary groves, high-arching o'er the vale
With day-rejecting gloom. The ſolemn ſhade
Half round a ſpacious lawn at length expands,
(f) Clos'd by a tow'ring cliff, whoſe forehead glows
With azure, purple, and ten thouſand dyes,
From its reſplendent fragments beaming round;
Nor leſs irradiate colours from beneath
On every ſide an ample grot reflects,
As down the perforated rock the ſun
Pours his meridian blaze! rever'd abode
Of Nyſa's nymphs, with every plant attir'd,
That wears undying green, refreſh'd with rills
From ever living fountains, and enrich'd
With all Pomona's bloom: unfading flowers
Glow on the mead, and ſpicy ſhrubs perfume
With unexhauſted ſweets the cooling gale,
Which breathes inceſſant there; while ev'ry bird
Of tuneful note his gay or plaintive ſong

(c) Triton, a river and lake of ancient Lybia.
(d) Fruitfulneſs. (e) Plenty.
(f) This whole deſcription of the rock and grotto is taken from Diod. Siculus, lib. 3. p. pag. 202.

Blends with the warble of meandring ſtreams,
Which o'er their pebbled channels murm'ring lave
The fruit-inveſted hills, that riſe around.
The gentle Nereids to this calm receſs
Phœnice bear; nor Dapſiléa bland,
Nor good Eucarpé, ſtudious to obey
Great Neptune's will, their hoſpitable care
Refuſe; nor long Lucina is invok'd.
Soon as the wond'rous infant ſprung to day,
Earth rock'd around; with all their nodding woods,
And ſtreams reverting to their troubled ſource,
The mountain ſhook, while Lybia's neighb'ring god,
Myſterious Ammon, from his hollow cell
With deep reſounding accent thus to heaven,
To earth, and ſea, the mighty birth proclaim'd.
A new-born power behold! whom fate hath call'd
The god's imperfect labour to complete
This wide creation. She in lonely ſands
Shall bid the tower-encircled city riſe,
The barren ſea ſhall people, and the wilds
Of dreary nature ſhall with plenty clothe;
She ſhall enlighten man's unletter'd race,
And with endearing intercourſe unite
Remoteſt nations, ſcorch'd by ſultry ſuns,
Or freezing near the ſnow-incruſted pole:
Where'er the joyous vine diſdains to grow,
The fruitful olive, or the golden ear;
Her hand divine, with interpoſing aid,
To every climate ſhall the gifts ſupply
Of Ceres, Bacchus, and (*g*) the Athenian maid;
The graces, joys, emoluments of life
From her exhauſtleſs bounty all ſhall flow.
The heavenly prophet ceas'd. Olympus heard.
Staight from their ſtar-beſpangled thrones deſcend
On blooming Nyſa a celeſtial band,
The ocean's lord to honour in his child;
When o'er his offspring ſmiling thus began

(*g*) Minerva, the tutelary goddeſs of the Athenians, to whom ſhe gave the olive.

The trident-ruler: Commerce be thy name:
To thee I give the empire of the main,
From where the morning breathes its eastern gale,
To th' undiscover'd limits of the west,
From chilling Boreas to extremest south
Thy sire's obsequious billows shall extend
Thy universal reign. Minerva next
With wisdom bless'd her, Mercury with art,
(*b*) The Lemnian god with industry, and last
Majestic Phœbus, o'er the infant long
In contemplation pausing, thus declar'd
From his enraptur'd lip his matchless boon:
Thee, with divine invention I endow,
That secret wonder, goddess, to disclose,
By which the wise, the virtuous, and the brave,
The heaven-taught poet and exploring sage
Shall pass recorded to the verge of time.
Her years of childhood now were number'd o'er,
When to her mother's natal soil repair'd
The new divinity whose parting step
Her sacred nurses follow'd, ever now
To her alone inseparably join'd;
Then first deserting their Nysean shore
To spread their hoarded blessings round the world;
Who with them bore the unexhausted horn
Of ever-smiling plenty. Thus adorn'd,
Attended thus, great goddess, thou began'st
Thy all enlivening progress o'er the globe,
Then rude and joyless, destin'd to repair
The various ills which earliest ages ru'd
From one, like thee, distinguish'd by the gifts
Of heaven, Pandora; whose pernicious hand
From the dire vase releas'd th' imprison'd woes.
Thou gracious commerce, from his cheerless caves
In horrid rocks and solitary woods,
The helpless wand'rer, man, forlorn and wild,
Didst charm to sweet society; didst cast
The deep foundations, where the future pride

(*b*) Vulcan, the tutelar deity of Lemnos.

Of mightieſt cities roſe, and o'er the main
Before the wond'ring Nereids didſt preſent
The ſurge-dividing keel, and ſtately maſt,
Whoſe canvaſs wings, diſtending with the gale,
The bold Phœnician through Alcides' ſtraits
To northern Albions tin-embowell'd fields,
And oft beneath the ſea-obſcuring brow
Of cloud-envelop'd Teneriff convey'd.
Next in ſagacious thought th' ethereal plains
Thou trod'ſt, exploring each propitious ſtar
The danger-braving mariner to guide;
Then all the latent and myſterious powers
Of number didſt unravel: laſt to crown
Thy bounties, goddeſs, thy unrival'd toils
For man, ſtill urging thy inventive mind,
Thou gav'ſt him (*i*) letters; there imparting all
Which lifts the ennobled ſpirit near to heaven,
Laws, learning, wiſdom, Nature's works reveal'd
By godlike ſages, all Minerva's arts,
Apollo's muſic, and th' eternal voice
Of virtue ſounding from the hiſtoric roll,
The philoſophic page, and poet's ſong.
Now ſolitude and ſilence from the ſhores
Retreat, on pathleſs mountains to reſide,
Barbarity is poliſh'd, infant arts
Bloom in the deſert, and benignant peace
With hoſpitality begin to ſooth
Unſocial rapine, and the thirſt of blood;
As from his tumid urn when Nilus ſpreads
His genial tides abroad, the favour'd ſoil
That joins his fruitful border, firſt imbibes
The kindly ſtream: anon the bounteous god
His waves extends, embracing Egypt round,
Dwells on the teeming champain, and endows
The ſleeping grain with vigour to attire
In one bright harveſt all the Pharian plains:
Thus, when Pygmalion from Phœnician Tyre
Had baniſh'd freedom, with diſdainful ſteps

(*i*) Here the opinion of Sir Iſaac Newton is followed, that letters were firſt invented amongſt the trading parts of the world.

Indignant commerce, turning from the walls
Herſelf had rais'd, her welcome ſway enlarg'd
Among the nations, ſpreading round the globe
The fruits of all its climes; (*k*) Cecropian oil,
The Thracian vintage, and Panchaian gums,
Arabia's ſpices, and the golden grain,
Which old Oſiris to his Egypt gave,
And Ceres to (*l*) Sicania. Thou didſt raiſe
Th' Ionian name, O commerce, thou the domes
Of ſumptuous Corinth, and the ample round
Of Syracuſe didſt people.——All the wealth
Now thou aſſembleſt from Iberia's mines,
And golden-channell'd Tagus, all the ſpoils
From fair (*m*) Trinacria waſted, all the powers,
Of conquer'd Afric's tributary realms
To fix thy empire on the Lybian verge,
Thy native tract; the nymphs of Nyſa hail
Thy glad return, and echoing joy reſounds
O'er Triton's ſacred waters, but in vain:
The irreverſible decrees of heaven
To far more northern regions had ordain'd
Thy laſting ſeat; in vain th' imperial port
Receives the gather'd riches of the world:
In vain whole climates bow beneath its rule;
Behold the toil of centuries to Rome
Its glories yield, and mould'ring leaves no trace
Of its deep-rooted greatneſs; thou with tears
From thy extinguiſh'd Carthage didſt retire,
And theſe thy periſh'd honours long deplore.
What though rich (*n*) Gades, what though poliſh'd Rhodes,
With Alexandria, Egypt's ſplendid mart,
The learn'd (*o*) Maſſylians, and (*p*) Ligurian tow'rs,

(*k*) Athenian. Athens was called Cecropia, from Cecrops, its firſt king.

(*l*) Sicily.

(*m*) Another name of Sicily, which was frequently ravaged by the Carthaginians.

(*n*) Cadiz.

(*o*) Marſeilles, a Grecian colony, the moſt civilized as well as the greateſt trading city of ancient Gaul.

(*p*) Genoa.

What though the potent Hanſeatic league,
And Venice, miſtreſs of the Grecian iſles,
With all the Ægean floods, awhile might ſooth
The ſad remembrance; what though led through climes
And ſeas unknown, with thee th' advent'rous ſons.
(q) Tagus paſs'd the ſtormy cape, which braves
The huge Atlantic; what though Antwerp grew
Beneath thy ſmiles, and thou propitious there
Didſt ſhower thy bleſſings with unſparing hands:
Still on thy grief-indented heart impreſs'd
The great Amilcar's valour, ſtill the deeds
Of Aſdrubal and Mago, ſtill the loſs
Of thy unequal, Annibal, remain'd:
Till from the ſandy mouths of echoing Rhine,
And ſounding margin of the Scheldt and Maeſe,
With ſudden roar the angry voice of war
Alarm'd thy languor; wonder turn'd thy eye.
Lo! in bright arms a bold militia ſtood,
Arrang'd for battle: from afar thou ſaw'ſt
The ſnowy ridge of Appenine, the fields
Of wild Calabria, and Pyrene's hills,
The Guadiana, and the Duro's banks,
And rapid Ebro gath'ring all their powers
To cruſh this daring populace, the pride
Of fierceſt kings with more enflam'd revenge
Ne'er menac'd freedom; nor, ſince dauntleſs Greece,
And Rome's ſtern offspring, none hath e'er ſurpaſs'd
The bold (r) Batavian in his glorious toil
For liberty, or death. At once the thought
Of long lamented Carthage flies thy breaſt,
And ardent, goddeſs, thou doſt ſpeed to ſave
The generous people. Not the vernal ſhowers,
Diſtilling copious from the morning clouds,
Deſcend more kindly on the tender flower,
New-born and opening on the lap of ſpring,
Than on this riſing ſtate thy cheering ſmile,

(q) The Portugueſe diſcovered the Cape of Good Hope in 1487.
(r) The Dutch.

And animating preſence; while on Spain,
Prophetic thus, thy indignation broke:
Inſatiate race! the ſhame of poliſh'd lands!
Diſgrace of Europe! for inhuman deeds
And inſolence renown'd! what demon led
Thee firſt to plough the undiſcover'd ſurge,
Which lav'd an hidden world? whoſe malice taught
Thee firſt to taint with rapine, and with rage,
With more than ſavage thirſt of blood the arts,
By me for gentleſt intercourſe ordain'd,
For mutual aids, and hoſpitable ties
From ſhore to ſhore? Or, that pernicious hour,
Was heaven diſguſted with its wond'rous works,
That to thy fell exterminating hand
Th' immenſe Peruvian empire it reſign'd,
And all, which lordly (s) Montezuma ſway'd?
And com'ſt thou, ſtrength'd with the ſhining ſtores
Of that gold teeming hemiſphere, to waſte
The ſmiling fields of Europe, and extend
Thy bloody ſhackles o'er theſe happy ſeats
Of liberty? Preſumptuous nation, learn,
From this dire period ſhall thy glories fade,
Thy ſlaughter'd youth ſhall fatten Belgium's ſands,
And victory againſt her Albion's cliffs
Shall ſee the blood empurpl'd ocean daſh
Thy weltering hoſts, and ſtain the chalky ſhore:
Ev'n thoſe, whom now thy impious pride would bind
In ſervile chains, hereafter ſhall ſupport
Thy weaken'd throne; when heaven's afflicting hand
Of all thy power deſpoils thee, when alone
Of all, which e'er hath ſignaliz'd thy name,
Thy inſolence and cruelty remain.
Thus with her clouded viſage, wrapt in frowns,
The goddeſs threaten'd, and the daring train
Of her untam'd militia, torn with wounds,
Deſpiſing fortune, from repeated foils
More fierce, and braving famine's keeneſt rage,
At length through deluges of blood ſhe led

(s) Montezuma, emperor of Mexico.

To envied greatneſs; ev'n while clamorous Mars
With loudeſt clangor bade his trumpet ſhake
The Belgian champain, ſhe their ſtandard rear'd
On tributary Java, and the ſhores
Of huge Borneo; thou, Sumatra, heard'ſt
Her naval thunder, Ceylon's trembling ſons
Their fragrant ſtores of cinnamon reſign'd;
And odour-breathing Ternate and Tidore
Their ſpicy groves. And O whatever coaſt
The Belgians trace, where'er their power is ſpread
To hoary Zembla, or to Indian ſuns,
Still thither be extended thy renown,
O William, pride of Orange, and ador'd
Thy virtues, which diſdaining life, or wealth,
Or empire, whether in thy dawn of youth
Thy glorious noon of manhood, or the night,
(*t*) The fatal night of death, no other care
Beſides the public own'd. And dear to fame
Be thou harmonious (*u*) Douza; every muſe,
Your laurel ſtrow around this hero's urn
Whom fond Minerva grac'd with all her arts.
Alike in letters and in arms to ſhine,
A dauntleſs warrior, and a learned bard.
Him Spain's ſurrounding hoſt for ſlaughter mark'd,
With maſſacre yet reeking from the ſtreets
Of blood-ſtain'd Harlem: he on Leyden's tow'rs,
With famine his companion, wan, ſubdu'd
In outward form, with patient virtue ſtood
Superior to deſpair; the heavenly nine
His ſuffering ſoul with great examples cheer'd
Of memorable bards, by Mars adorn'd
With wreaths of fame; (*x*) Oeagrus tuneful ſon,

(*t*) He was aſſaſſinated at Delf. His dying words were, Lord have mercy upon this people.

See Grot. de Bell. Belg.

(*u*) Janus Douza, a famous poet, and the moſt learned man of his time. He commanded in Leyden when it was ſo obſtinately beſieged by the Spaniards in 1570.

See Meurſii Athen. Bat.

(*x*) Orpheus, one of the Argonauts, who ſet ſail from Iolcos, a town in Theſſalia.

Who with melodious praiſe to nobleſt deeds
Charm'd the Iolchian heroes, and himſelf
Their danger ſhar'd ; (y) Tyrtæus, who reviv'd
With animating verſe the Spartan hopes ;
Brave (z) Æſchylus and (a) Sophocles, around
Whoſe ſacred brows the tragic ivy twin'd,
Mix'd with the warrior's laurel ; all ſurpaſs'd
By Douza's valour : and the generous toil,
His and his country's labours ſoon receiv'd
Their high reward, when favouring commerce rais'd,
Th' invincible Batavians, till, rever'd
Among the mightieſt on the brighteſt roll
Of fame they ſhone, by ſplendid wealth and power
Grac'd and ſupported ; thus a genial ſoil
Diffuſing vigour through the infant oak,
Affords it ſtrength to flouriſh, till at laſt
Its lofty head, in verdant honours clad,
It rears amidſt the proudeſt of the grove.
Yet here th' eternal fates thy laſt retreat
Deny, a mightier nation they prepare
For thy reception, ſufferers alike
By th' unremitted inſolence of power
From reign to reign, nor leſs than Belgium known
For bold contention oft on crimſon fields,
In free-tongu'd ſenates oft with nervous laws
To circumſcribe, or conquering to depoſe
Their ſcepter'd tyrants : Albion ſea-embrac'd,
The joy of freedom, dread of treacherous kings,
The deſtin'd miſtreſs of the ſubject main,
And arbitreſs of Europe, now demands
Thy preſence, goddeſs. It was now the time,
Ere yet perfidious Cromwell dar'd profane
The ſacred ſenate, and with impious feet
Tread on the powers of magiſtrates and laws,

(y) When the Spartans were greatly diſtreſſed in the Meſſenian war, they applied to the Athenians for a general, who ſent them the poet Tyrtæus.

(z) Æſchylus, one of the moſt ancient tragic poets, who ſignalized himſelf in the battles of Marathon and Salamis.

(a) Sophocles commanded his countrymen the Athenians, in ſeveral expeditions.

While every arm was chill'd with cold amaze,
Nor one in all that dauntleſs train was found
To pierce the ruffian's heart; and now thy name
Was heard in thunder through th' affrighted ſhores
Of pale Iberia, of ſubmiſſive Gaul,
And Tagus, trembling to his utmoſt ſource.
O ever faithful, vigilant, and brave,
Thou bold aſſertor of Britannia's fame,
Unconquerable Blake: propitious heaven
At this great era, and (*b*) the ſage decree
Of Albion's ſenate, perfecting at once
What by (*c*) Eliza was ſo well begun,
So deeply founded, to this favour'd ſhore
The goddeſs drew, where grateful ſhe beſtow'd
Th' unbounded empire of her father's floods,
And choſe thee, London, for her chief abode,
Pleas'd with the ſilver Thames, its gentle ſtream,
And ſmiling banks, its joy diffuſing hills,
Which clad with ſplendour, and with beauty grac'd,
O'erlook his lucid boſom; pleas'd with thee,
Thou nurſe of arts, and thy induſtrious race;
Pleas'd with their candid manners, with their free
Sagacious converſe, to inquiry led,
And zeal for knowledge; hence the opening mind
Reſigns its errors, and unſeals the eye
Of blind opinion; merit hence is heard
Amidſt its bluſhes, dawning arts ariſe,
The gloomy clouds, which ignorance or fear
Spread o'er the paths of virtue are diſpell'd,
Servility retires, and every heart
With public cares is warm'd; thy merchants hence,
Illuſtrious city, thou doſt raiſe to fame.
How many names of glory may'ſt thou trace
From earlieſt annals down to (*d*) Barnard's times!
And, O! if like that eloquence divine,

(*b*) The act of navigation.

(*c*) Queen Elizabeth was the firſt of our princes, who gave any conſiderable encouragement to trade.

(*d*) Sir John Barnard.

Which forth for commerce, for Britannia's rights,
And her insulted majesty he pour'd,
These humble measures flow'd, then too thy walls
Might undisgrac'd resound thy poet's name,
Who now all-fearful to thy praise attunes
His lyre, and pays his grateful song to thee,
Thy votary, O commerce! Gracious power,
Continue still to hear my vows, and bless
My honourable industry, which courts
No other smile but thine; for thou alone
Can'st wealth bestow with independence crown'd.
Nor yet exclude contemplative repose,
But to my dwelling grant the solemn calm
Of learned leisure, never to reject
The visitation of the tuneful maids,
Who seldom deign to leave their sacred haunts,
And grace a mortal mansion; thou divide
With them my labours; pleasure I resign,
And, all devoted to my midnight lamp,
E'en now, when Albion o'er the foaming breast
Of groaning Tethys spreads its threat'ning fleets,
I grasp the sounding shell, prepar'd to sing
That hero's valour, who shall best confound
His injur'd country's foes; ev'n now I feel
Celestial fires descending on my breast,
Which prompt thy daring suppliant to explore,
Why, though deriv'd from Neptune, though rever'd
Among the nations, by the gods endow'd,
Thou never yet from eldest times hast found
One permanent abode; why oft expell'd,
Thy favour'd seats, from clime to clime hast borne
Thy wandering steps; why London late hath seen
(Thy lov'd, thy last retreat), desponding care
O'ercloud thy brow: O listen, while the muse,
Th' immortal progeny of Jove, unfolds
The fatal cause. What time in Nysa's cave
Th' ethereal train, in honour to thy sire,
Shower'd on thy birth their blended gifts, the power
Of war was absent; hence, unbless'd by Mars,

Thy ſons relinquiſh'd arms, on other arts
Intent, and ſtill to mercenary hands
The ſword intruſting, vainly deem'd that wealth
Could purchaſe laſting ſafety, and protect
Unwarlike freedom; hence the Alps in vain
Were paſs'd, their long impenetrable ſnows,
And dreary torrents; ſwoln with Roman dead,
Aſtoniſh'd (*e*) Trebia overflow'd its banks
In vain, and deep-dy'd Traſimenus roll'd
Its crimſon waters; Cannæ's ſignal day
The fame alone of great Amilcar's ſon
Enlarg'd, while ſtill undiſciplin'd, diſmay'd,
Her head commercial Carthage bow'd at laſt
To military Rome: th' unalter'd will
Of Heaven in every climate hath ordain'd,
And every age, that empire ſhall attend
The ſword, and ſteel ſhall ever conquer gold.
Then from thy ſufferings learn; th' auſpicious hour
Now ſmiles; our wary magiſtrates have arm'd
Our hands; thou, goddeſs, animate our breaſts
To caſt inglorious indolence aſide,
That once again, in bright battalions rang'd,
Our thouſands and ten thouſands may be ſeen
Their country's only rampart, and the dread
Of wild ambition. Mark the Swediſh hind;
He, on his native ſoil ſhould danger lowr,
Soon from the entrails of the duſky mine
Would riſe to arms; and other fields and chiefs
With Helſingburg (*f*) and Steinboch ſoon would ſhare
The admiration of the northern world:
Helvetia's hills behold, th' aërial ſeat
Of long-ſupported liberty, who thence,
Securely reſting on her faithful ſhield,
The warrior's corſelet flaming on her breaſt,

(*e*) Trebia, Traſimenus lacus, and Cannæ, famous for the victories gained by Hannibal over the Romans.

(*f*) Helſingburg a ſmall town in Schonem, celebrated for the victory which Count Steinboch gained over the Danes, with an army for the moſt part compoſed of Swediſh peaſants, who had never ſeen an enemy before: it is remarkable, that the defeated troops were as complete a body of regular forces as any in all Europe.

Looks down with ſcorn on ſpacious realms, which groan
In ſervitude around her, and her ſword
With dauntleſs ſkill high brandiſhing, defies
The Auſtrian eagle, and imperious Gaul:
And O! could thoſe ill-fated ſhades ariſe,
Whoſe valiant ranks along th' entanguin'd duſt
Of (g) Newbury lay crowded, they could tell,
How their long-matchleſs cavalry, ſo oft
O'er hills of ſlain by ardent Rupert led,
Whoſe dreaded ſtandard victory had wav'd,
Till then triumphant, there with nobleſt blood
From their gor'd ſquadrons dy'd the reſtive ſpear
Of London's firm militia, and reſign'd
The well-diſputed field; then goddeſs, ſay,
Shall we be now more timid, when, behold,
The black'ning ſtorm now gathers round our heads,
And England's angry genius ſounds to arms?
For thee, remember, is the banner ſpread;
The naval tower to vindicate thy rights
Will ſweep the curling foam: the thund'ring bomb
Will roar, and ſtartle in the deepeſt grots
Old Nereus' daughters; with combuſtion ſtor'd,
For thee our dire volcanos of the main,
Impregnated with horror, ſoon will pour
Their flaming ruin round each hoſtile fleet:
Thou then, great goddeſs, ſummon all thy powers,
Arm all thy ſons, thy vaſſals, every heart
Inflame: and you, ye fear-diſclaiming race,
Ye mariners of Britain, choſen train
Of liberty and commerce, now no more
Secrete your generous valour; hear the call
Of injur'd Albion; to her foes preſent

(g) The London train'd-band, and auxiliary regiments (of whoſe inexperience of danger, or any kind of ſervice, beyond the eaſy practice of their poſtures in the Artillery-Ground, had till then too cheap an eſtimation), behaved themſelves to wonder; and were, in truth, the preſervation of that army that day. For they ſtood as a bulwark and rampire to defend the reſt; and when their wings of horſe were ſcattered and diſperſed, kept their ground ſo ſteadily, that though Prince Rupert himſelf led up the choice horſe to charge them, and endured the ſtorm of ſmall ſhot, he could make no impreſſion on their ſtand of pikes: but was forced to wheel about. *Clarend. vol. 7. page 347.*

Thoſe daring boſoms, which alike diſdain
The death-diſploding cannon, and the rage
Of warring tempeſts, mingling in their ſtrife
The ſeas and clouds: though long in ſilence huſh'd
Hath ſlept the Britiſh thunder; though the pride
Of weak Iberia hath forgot the roar;
Soon ſhall her ancient terrors be recall'd,
When your victorious ſhouts affright her ſhores:
None now ignobly will your warmth reſtrain,
Nor hazard more indignant valour's curſe,
Their country's wrath, and time's eternal ſcorn
Then bid the furies of Bellona wake,
And ſilver-mantled peace with welcome ſteps
Anon ſhall viſit your triumphant iſle.
And that perpetual ſafety may poſſeſs
Our joyous fields, thou, genius, who preſid'ſt
O'er this illuſtrious city, teach her ſons
To wield the noble inſtruments of war;
And let the great example ſoon extend
Through every province, till Britannia ſees
Her docile millions fill the martial plain:
Then, whatſoe'er our terrors now ſuggeſt
Of deſolation, and th' invading ſword;
Though with his maſſy trident Neptune heav'd
A new-born iſthmus from the Britiſh deep,
And to its parent continent rejoin'd
Our chalky ſhore; though Mahomet could league
His powerful creſcent with the hoſtile Gaul,
And that new Cyrus of the conquer'd eaſt,
Who now in trembling vaſſalage unites
The Ganges and Euphrates, could advance
With his auxiliar hoſt; our warlike youth
With (*b*) equal numbers, and with keener zeal
For children, parents, friends, for England fir'd,
Her fertile glebe, her wealthy towns, her laws,
Her liberty, her honour, ſhould ſuſtain

(*b*) If the computation, which allots near two millions of fighting men to this kingdom may be relied on, it is not eaſy to conceive, how the united force of the whole world could aſſemble together, and ſubſiſt in an enemy's country, greater numbers than they would find oppoſed to them here.

The dreadful onset, and resistless break
Th' immense array: thus ev'n the lightest thought
E'er to invade Britannia's calm repose,
Must die the moment that auspicious Mars
Her sons shall bless with discipline and arms;
That exil'd race, in superstition nurs'd,
The servile pupils of tyrannic Rome,
With distant gaze despairing, shall behold
The guarded splendours of Britannia's crown;
Still from their abdicated sway estrang'd,
With all th' attendance on despotic thrones,
Priests, ignorance, and bonds; with watchful step
Gigantic terror, striding round our coast,
Shall shake his Gorgan ægis, and the hearts
Of proudest kings appal; to other shores
Our angry fleets, when insolence and wrongs
To arms awaken our vindictive power,
Shall bear the hideous waste of ruthless war;
But liberty, security, and fame,
Shall dwell for ever on our chosen plains.

ADMIRAL HOSIER'S GHOST.

As near Porto-Bello lying
On the gently-swelling flood,
At midnight with streamers flying
Our triumphant navy rode;
There while Vernon sat all-glorious
From the Spaniards' late defeat:
And his crews, with shouts victorious,
Drank success to England's fleet:

On a sudden, shrilly sounding,
Hideous yells and shrieks were heard;
Then each heart with fear confounding,
A sad troop of ghosts appear'd,
All in dreary hammocks shrouded,
Which for winding-sheets they wore,
And with looks by sorrow clouded
Frowning on that hostile shore.

On them gleam'd the moon's wan luſtre,
When the ſhade of Hoſier brave
His pale bands was ſeen to muſter,
Riſing from their wat'ry grave:
O'er the glimmering wave he hy'd him,
Where the Burford rear'd her ſail,
With three thouſand ghoſts beſides him,
And in groans did Vernon hail.

Heed, O heed, our fatal ſtory,
I am Hoſier's injur'd ghoſt,
You, who now have purchas'd glory
At this place where I was loſt;
Though in Porto-Bello's ruin
You now triumph free from fears,
When you think on our undoing,
You will mix your joy with tears.

See theſe mournful ſpectres ſweeping
Ghaſtly o'er this hated wave,
Whoſe wan cheeks are ſtain'd with weeping;
Theſe were Engliſh captains brave:
Mark thoſe numbers pale and horrid,
Thoſe were once my ſailors bold,
Lo, each hangs his drooping forehead,
While his diſmal tale is told.

I, by twenty ſail attended,
Did this Spaniſh town affright;
Nothing then its wealth defended
But my orders not to fight:
O! that in this rolling ocean
I had caſt them with diſdain,
And obey'd my heart's warm motion,
To have quell'd the pride of Spain;

For reſiſtance I could fear none,
But with twenty ſhips had done
What thou, brave and happy Vernon,
Haſt achiev'd with ſix alone.

Then the Baſtimentos never
Had our foul diſhonour ſeen,
Nor the ſea the ſad receiver
Of this gallant train had been.

Thus, like thee, proud Spain diſmaying,
And her galleons leading home,
Though condemn'd for diſobeying,
I had met a traitor's doom.
To have fallen, my country crying
He has play'd an Engliſh part,
Had been better far than dying
Of a griev'd and broken heart.

Unrepining at thy glory,
Thy ſucceſsful arms we hail;
But remember our ſad ſtory,
And let Hoſier's wrongs prevail.
Sent in this foul clime to languiſh,
Think what thouſands fell in vain,
Waſted with diſeaſe and anguiſh,
Not in glorious battle ſlain.

Hence with all my train attending,
From their oozy tombs below,
Through the hoary foam aſcending,
Here I feed my conſtant woe;
Here the Baſtimentos viewing,
We recal our ſhameful doom,
And our plaintive cries renewing,
Wander through the midnight gloom.

O'er theſe waves for ever mourning
Shall we roam depriv'd of reſt,
If to Britain's ſhores returning
You neglect my juſt requeſt;
After this proud foe ſubduing,
When your patriot friends you ſee,
Think on vengeance for my ruin,
And for England ſham'd in me.

THE END.

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